JUNJI ITO

STORY COLLECTION

TOMBS

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TOMBS

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TOMBS

墓標の町

SHE SAID HER NEW TOWN WAS A STRANGE ONE, SO I SHOULD COME VISIT HER.

I GOT A LETTER FROM MY FRIEND IZUMI WHO MOVED AWAY LAST YEAR.

YEAH. MAYBE I'LL GO OVER THE LONG WEEKEND.

KRZCH KRZCH

HUH. SHE SAID TO COME VISIT?

WHAT? ARE YOU SURE? I MEAN, YOU JUST GOT YOUR LICENSE...

DON'T EVEN WORRY ABOUT IT.

LET ME HELP YOU OUT! I'VE GOT A NEW CAR AND ALL. I'LL GIVE YOU A RIDE, KAORU!

VRRRRR

I BET YOU'RE ACTUALLY JUST EXCITED TO SEE IZUMI.

THE WEATHER, THE CAR.

EVERY-THING'S PERFECT.

HUH? OH YEAH?

IZUMI SEEMED PRETTY PSYCHED WHEN I TOLD HER YOU WERE COMING, Y'KNOW.

HA HA! I DUNNO ABOUT THAT.

W-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! I'M WORRIED ABOUT MY BABY SISTER, THAT'S ALL. SO I'M COMING ALONG TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

NAH! WE'RE ALMOST THERE. HA HA HA!

MAYBE YOU SHOULD TAKE A BREAK?

WE'VE BEEN ON THE ROAD SIX HOURS ALREADY. HER TOWN'S PRETTY FAR.

VRRR

HOW EXACTLY IS IT STRANGE?

WHAT? OH. ANYWAY. ABOUT THIS "STRANGE" TOWN...

HONESTLY! YOU'VE BEEN GRINNING LIKE AN IDIOT THIS WHOLE TIME.

AH!

WATCH OUT!

AH!

WHAT ?!

THUD

SKREEEEEE

CRAP!

SHINAGAWA 33
SA 32-75

KAORU! HELP ME GET HER INTO THE CAR! WE HAVE TO GET HER TO A HOSPITAL!

SHE'S IN BAD SHAPE.

IT'S NO USE.

HEY!

HEY! YOU OKAY?!

THIS IS AWFUL. HER FACE IS SO SWOLLEN.

VRRRRR

I-I CAN'T FEEL HER PULSE.

WHAT ?!

IS SHE DEAD?

...

SKREE

WE HAVE TO GET TO THE HOSPITAL!

WHAT'S WRONG? WHY DID YOU STOP?

SO THIS IS WHERE IZUMI LIVES...

SKREE

WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE GETTING TO HER HOUSE.

LET'S DRIVE RIGHT THROUGH TOWN, FIND A GOOD SPOT.

SOME-WHERE IN THE MOUNTAINS MAYBE.

BUT YOU WOULDN'T HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT SMACK IN THE ROAD.

IS IT A SIGN-POST?

WHAT'S THIS THING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD?

A TOMB-STONE?

IT LOOKED LIKE... A TOMB-STONE.

YRRR YRRR YRRR YRRR

AH!

...

WHY WOULD A TOMBSTONE BE STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD?

WELL, I GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TURN AROUND.

WHAT *IS* ALL THIS?

THUNK

BANG

SCRAACK

KRRRK

KACHAK

UGH. WE'RE STUCK.

THE STONE'S SPLIT RIGHT IN TWO.

AAH, REALLY GOT IT WEDGED IN THERE.

AH!

OF ALL THE TIMES...

SHIT.

SHINAGAWA 33
SA 32-75

WE'LL GIVE YOU A HAND.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING? GET YOUR JACK OUT. IT'S IN THE TRUNK, YEAH?

UH. THANKS ...

YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE, THEN?

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO JACK UP THE CAR.

...

HOPE YOU DON'T END UP CURSED.

THIS IS PRETTY DAMNING, THOUGH.

SHINAGAWA 33
SA 32-75

KACHAK

SLAM

FISH

AND UP WE GO!

SHINAGAWA SA 32

WITH ALL THESE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD, WE CAN'T EXACTLY GO BLAMING THE DRIVER.

CLAP CLAP CLAP

PHEW!

THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

NO TROUBLE AT ALL.

YES. AT FIRST, IT WAS JUST FOLKS WHO DIED IN TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

BUT LATELY, OTHER STONES HAVE BEEN POPPING UP, SO THE ROADS ARE BASICALLY CLOSED.

ARE THEY ALL TOMB-STONES?

EEEK!

KAORU!

IZUMI ...

YOU MADE IT!

BUT WHY DO THE STONES APPEAR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD?

'CAUSE THE FOLKS DIED ON THE ROAD.

Y-YEAH. HELLO.

MY BROTHER CAME, TOO.

NEITHER HAVE YOU!

YOU'RE LATE. I WAS WORRIED. WOW! YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT!

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?

HELLO!

OH, RIGHT.

I'M USED TO IT NOW, THOUGH.

YOU WERE SURPRISED, I BET? I WAS TOO, AT FIRST.

ALL THE TOMBS ON THE ROAD.

IN FACT, CHECK THIS OUT.

WHY IS IT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM?

THIS IS WHERE THEY DIED.

THE HOUSE IS A RENTAL. I GUESS THIS BELONGS TO WHOEVER LIVED HERE BEFORE.

IT'S SOME STRANGER'S TOMB.

THERE'S ONE HERE, TOO.

IN THIS TOWN...THEY PLACE A TOMBSTONE WHEREVER THE PERSON PASSED AWAY?

I DON'T REALLY LIKE IT, BUT I GUESS PRETTY MUCH ALL RENTALS IN TOWN ARE THE SAME.

WELL... BASICALLY, YES.

UH-HUH.

WHAT?

GOODNESS! YOU DON'T LOOK TOO WELL.

THE TWO OF YOU ARE STAYING FOR A FEW DAYS, RIGHT?

I WAS SO SHOCKED WHEN WE FIRST GOT HERE.

NO WONDER YOU'RE A BIT OUT OF IT.

AND THEN THE SECOND YOU ARRIVE, YOU HIT A TOMB WITH YOUR CAR.

RIGHT ...

RIGHT, KAORU?

OH! IT WAS JUST A LONG TRIP, SO WE'RE A LITTLE TIRED.

HUH? OH, UH-HUH.

WELL, WHY DON'T YOU REST A MINUTE AND THEN IZUMI CAN SHOW YOU AROUND. HM, HONEY?

OKAY, MOM.

THEY BELONG TO THE ANCESTORS OF THE PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN.

THERE REALLY ARE STONES EVERYWHERE.

EACH STONE WAS ERECTED OVER THE PLACE THAT THE PERSON DIED.

NO MEANING AT ALL.

IS THERE ANY MEANING IN PLACING THE STONE WHERE THE PERSON DIED?

WOW. THAT'S A PRETTY WEIRD CUSTOM.

THEY TRY TO BRING PEOPLE ON THE VERGE OF DEATH TO A CLEAR SPOT OUTSIDE IF THEY CAN.

HOW IT IS?

THAT'S JUST HOW IT IS.

SO THEY BLOCK THE ROADS FOR NO REASON?

IN THIS TOWN, THE SPOT WHERE YOU DIE IS WHERE YOUR STONE GOES. NO MATTER WHAT. THEY'VE ALWAYS DONE IT LIKE THIS.

HE'S GOING TO DIE!

HURRY!

KLAKKA KLAKKA KLAKKA KLAKKA

ONISHI HOSPITAL

COME ON! HURRY!

GENTLY NOW!

THAT PATIENT'S ABOUT TO DIE. THEY CAN'T HAVE HIM DYING IN THE HOSPITAL, SO THEY BROUGHT HIM OUTSIDE.

WHAT THE ...

BUT THERE'S NOTHING ELSE THEY CAN DO. THEY CAN'T HAVE TOMBS INSIDE THE HOSPITAL.

IT'S SO HEARTLESS, *HUH?* I MEAN, TOSSING A DYING PERSON ON THE GROUND LIKE THAT.

YEAH? SORRY. I KNOW IT'S A BIT MUCH.

SHE'S JUST BAFFLED BY THIS TOWN, THAT'S ALL.

IS SOME-THING BOTHER-ING YOU?

KAORU, YOU'VE BEEN REALLY QUIET THIS WHOLE TIME.

RIGHT! YOU'LL FEEL BETTER SOON!

NO, THAT'S NOT IT. I'M...A LITTLE CARSICK. I STILL FEEL QUEASY.

YOU LIKE THOSE SCARY BOOKS AND ALL.

I THOUGHT YOU'D FIND IT INTERESTING.

OKAY...

YOU SHOULD REST, THEN. LET'S GO BACK TO THE HOUSE.

AH!

THE TOMB-STONES HERE ARE A WEIRD SHAPE. AND ALL DIFFER-ENT SIZES.

MY BROTHER WAS FORCING HIMSELF TO BE CHEERFUL, BUT I JUST COULDN'T.

...

POOR LITTLE CAT. GOT HIT BY A CAR, I GUESS.

HUH ?!

AH! TSUYOSHI! DON'T TOUCH IT!

IT'S SO SAD. LET'S BURY IT SOME-WHERE.

A TOMB-STONE FOR A CAT?

...

JUST LEAVE IT. SO ITS TOMBSTONE CAN GO UP.

YOU CAN'T TOUCH IT. IF YOU DO, THE CAT WILL NEVER BE AT PEACE.

I MEAN, BUILDING A TOMBSTONE FOR A STRAY CAT THAT DIED IN THE ROAD.

PEOPLE HERE ARE PRETTY COMPASSIONATE.

I GET WHY THEY'RE DIFFERENT SIZES NOW. THE SMALLER ONES ARE FOR DOGS AND CATS, RIGHT?

SHE'S LATE. WHERE DID SHE GET OFF TO?

IS AYUMI NOT BACK YET?

IZUMI?

IZUMI'S LITTLE SISTER.

WHO'S AYUMI?

I DON'T KNOW. I HAVEN'T SEEN HER.

SHE'S BEEN OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS ALL DAY AGAIN.

SHE PROBABLY WENT PRETTY FAR.

THE SAME. ALWAYS THE TOMBOY.

HOW IS SHE?

WHY DIDN'T YOU REPORT THIS RIGHT AWAY?!

MAYBE SHE GOT LOST. OR MAYBE SHE WAS KIDNAPPED.

DID YOU CALL THE POLICE?

AYUMI STILL HADN'T RETURNED WHEN NIGHT FELL.

AND SHE'S SKINNY.

SHE'S A LITTLE SHORTER THAN ME.

WHAT'S AYUMI LOOK LIKE?

KAORU.

SHE WEARS IT IN BRAIDS A LOT.

IT'S LONG.

WHAT ABOUT HER HAIR?

IT'S JUST... HER FACE WAS ALL SWOLLEN. I COULDN'T TELL WHO IT WAS.

DON'T BE STUPID! YOU WOULD HAVE RECOGNIZED HER!

NO WAY. THE GIRL IN THE TRUNK CAN'T BE...

I GUESS THE GIRL WAS WEARING A STRIPED SHIRT AND WHITE SHORTS.

A STRIPED SHIRT AND WHITE SHORTS...

THE NEXT DAY, A SEARCH OF THE MOUNTAIN BEGAN.

THE LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD ALL JOINED IN.

NO. WE'RE WORRIED, TOO. BUT I'M SURE SHE'S FINE, IZUMI. AYUMI WILL TURN UP SAFE AND SOUND.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK, Y'KNOW.

I FOLLOWED SUIT.

ANSWER ME!

HEY! AYUMI!

MY BROTHER JOINED IN, EVEN THOUGH HE HADN'T BEEN ASKED TO.

...

SHH! DON'T SAY THAT.

SHE'S NOWHERE. YOU THINK SHE'S ALREADY DEAD WITH A TOMB OUT THERE SOME-PLACE?

WHAT IF HER FAMILY HEARS YOU?

WHAT?! SHE'S IN REAL TROUBLE IF SHE DID.

YOU THINK SHE MIGHTA FALLEN INTO THE OLD WELL AT THE SHRINE?

WELL, LET'S HEAD BACK AND TAKE A LOOK ANYWAY.

WE'VE BEEN OUT HERE FOR HOURS WITH NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT. MAYBE SHE'S NOT ON THE MOUNTAIN.

COURSE NOT. NO BOTTOM TO THIS WELL.
SO? YOU SEE ANYTHING?

MM-HMM. PRETTY MUCH.
IS THE WELL THAT DEEP?

DEAD WHO FAIL TO FIND PEACE?

WHAT? YOU NOT FROM AROUND HERE?

BUT WE STILL CAN'T SEE THE BOTTOM. DUNNO WHO DUG IT, BUT IT'S INCREDIBLY DEEP.

PEOPLE'VE BEEN THROWING THE DEAD WHO FAIL TO FIND PEACE INTO THIS WELL SINCE WAY BACK WHEN.

IF SHE FELL DOWN HERE, THERE'S NO SAVING HER.

AND THAT THERE'S A REAL TRAGEDY.

...THEY NEVER GOT A PROPER TOMB.

FAILING TO FIND PEACE MEANS...

Y'KNOW, SOMEONE DIED AT THE HOSPITAL YESTERDAY. WONDER IF THEY FOUND PEACE.

Y'ALL SHOULD GO TAKE A LOOK LATER.

AND HER BODY'S IN THE TRUNK OF THE CAR RIGHT NOW.

I KNOW ...!

WHAT'LL WE DO, TSUYOSHI?

WE KILLED AYUMI.

MAYBE WE EVEN TURN OUR-SELVES IN.

BUT WE'RE NOT SAYING A WORD TO ANYONE YET!

I'M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT WE SHOULD DO!

THANKS TO YOU, HE WAS ABLE TO FIND PEACE.

ONISHI HOSPITAL

?!

IF ANYONE HAD MOVED THE BODY, HE WOULDN'T HAVE MADE IT.

WE KEPT WATCH OVER HIM AT THE WAKE.

VIGIL

THAT'S WONDERFUL NEWS.

BY TOMORROW, HE'LL NO DOUBT HAVE BECOME A MAGNIFICENT TOMB.

IT REALLY IS WONDERFUL. HE'S GROWING INTO HIS STONE PILLAR NICELY.

WHAT... IS GOING ON HERE?

IT REALLY IS.

I WONDER WHERE OUR OWN TOMBS WILL END UP.

BUT THE HOSPITAL PARKING LOT'S GOING TO BE FILLED WITH TOMBS BEFORE TOO LONG.

HE'S TURNING TO STONE?

IT'S NOT FINISHED YET!

AH! DON'T TOUCH THAT!

...DEAD BODIES TRANSFORM INTO TOMB-STONES.

SO IN THIS TOWN...

NOW THAT I REALLY LOOK AT THEM, ON ALL THE TOMB-STONES...

SOME TRICK OF THIS AREA'S UNCANNY CLIMATE?

...YOU CAN SEE TRACES OF PEOPLE AND ANIMALS.

I WAS THINKING THE SAME THING.

YEAH.

TRAPPED IN A NIGHT-MARE?

TSUYOSHI, ARE WE MAYBE ASLEEP?

I HOPE IT *IS* A DREAM.

ME TOO.

I WONDER WHY.

IZUMI'S PEEKING INTO YOUR CAR.

WHAT'S UP?

H-HEY, IZUMI.

THANK YOU.

SO. WE WENT OUT TO THE OLD WELL AT THE SHRINE. BUT IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S NOT THERE.

FOR LOOKING FOR HER.

IT'S NOTHING.

OH...

THE POLICE ARE LOOKING INTO IT.

AND THERE WERE TRACES OF BLOOD AND PAINT FROM A CAR NEARBY.

SHINAGAWA 33
SA 32-75

WELL...

HOW'D THE SEARCH ON THE MOUN-TAIN GO?

BUT WE DID FIND SKID MARKS ON THE ROAD.

WE DIDN'T FIND AYUMI.

BUT AYUMI COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HIT BY A CAR, RIGHT?

Y-YEAH?

I STILL HAVE SOME THINGS TO DO.

YOU TWO GO INSIDE AND REST.

I SURE HOPE NOT.

MM-HMM.

AH!
TSU-YOSHI!
THAT'S WHAT IZUMI WAS LOOKING AT!
THERE'S BLOOD ON THE SEAT!
SURE, IT'S BLOOD, BUT NOT A LOT. SHE MIGHT NOT HAVE NOTICED IT.
JUST CALM DOWN!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? MAYBE IZUMI KNOWS?
C-CRAP! I DIDN'T REALIZE!

SHE HAS TO HAVE NOTICED. WE CAN'T KEEP HIDING THIS!

BUT THE HOOD IS DENTED. AND THERE'S A CRACK IN THE HEADLIGHT.

STOP IT, KAORU!

...

WHERE ON EARTH DID SHE GO?

THAT AYUMI ...

...IF SHE DIED AND IS BEING DRAGGED ALL OVER THE PLACE, SHE WON'T GET A TOMB.

IF... SHE'S DEAD...

I HOPE SHE'S ALIVE OUT THERE SOME-WHERE.

...I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.

IF SHE DOESN'T GROW INTO HER TOMB...

I'M SURE AYUMI'S DOING JUST FINE.

IZUMI. YOU GOTTA BE STRONG.

I... I ONCE SAW THE BODY OF SOME-ONE WHO FAILED TO TURN INTO A TOMB.

IN THE HOSPITAL PARKING LOT.

YOU CAN'T TOUCH DEAD BODIES IN THIS TOWN. TOUCHING A PERSON WHO'S JUST DIED...

...IS LIKE MESSING WITH AN INSECT'S CHRYSALIS. THE RESULTS ARE TRAGIC.

I DON'T KNOW WHEN THE WELL WAS DUG.

BUT IT'S INCREDIBLY DEEP. WHO KNOWS HOW MANY PEOPLE WHO FAILED TO FIND PEACE ARE SLEEPING AT THE BOTTOM OF IT?

HALF OF IT WAS STONE, BUT...

I COULDN'T BEAR TO LOOK AT IT.

THE BODY WOULD ROT IF THEY DIDN'T DO SOMETHING. BUT BURNING IT WOULD MAKE THIS TERRIBLE SMELL, SO THEY COULDN'T CREMATE IT. IN THE END, THEY TOSSED IT INTO THE OLD WELL AT THE SHRINE.

...

DID YOU SEE ANY SUSPICIOUS CARS?!

HEY, KAORU? TSUYOSHI? YOU DROVE HERE. DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING ALONG THE WAY?

I GUESS IT'S PRETTY LIKELY AYUMI WAS HIT BY A CAR ON THAT MOUNTAIN ROAD.

...

KAORU.

SO LISTEN—

I-IZUMI...

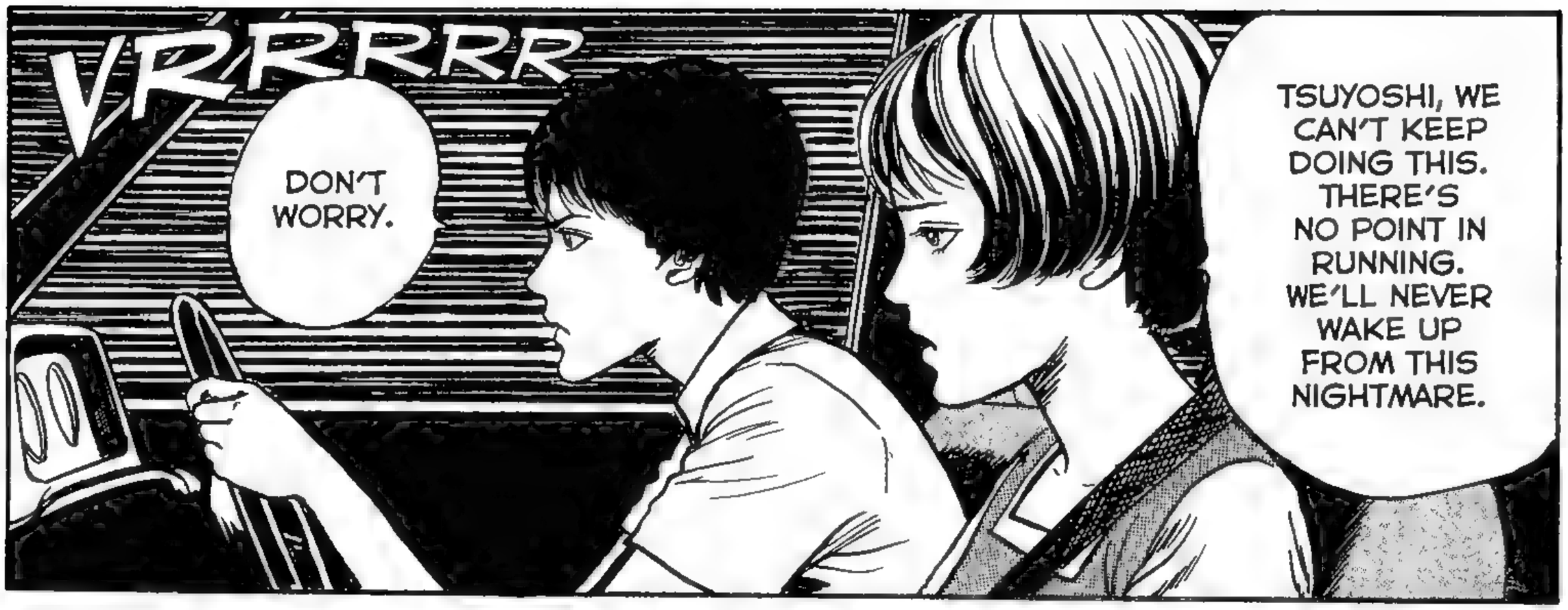
VRRRR

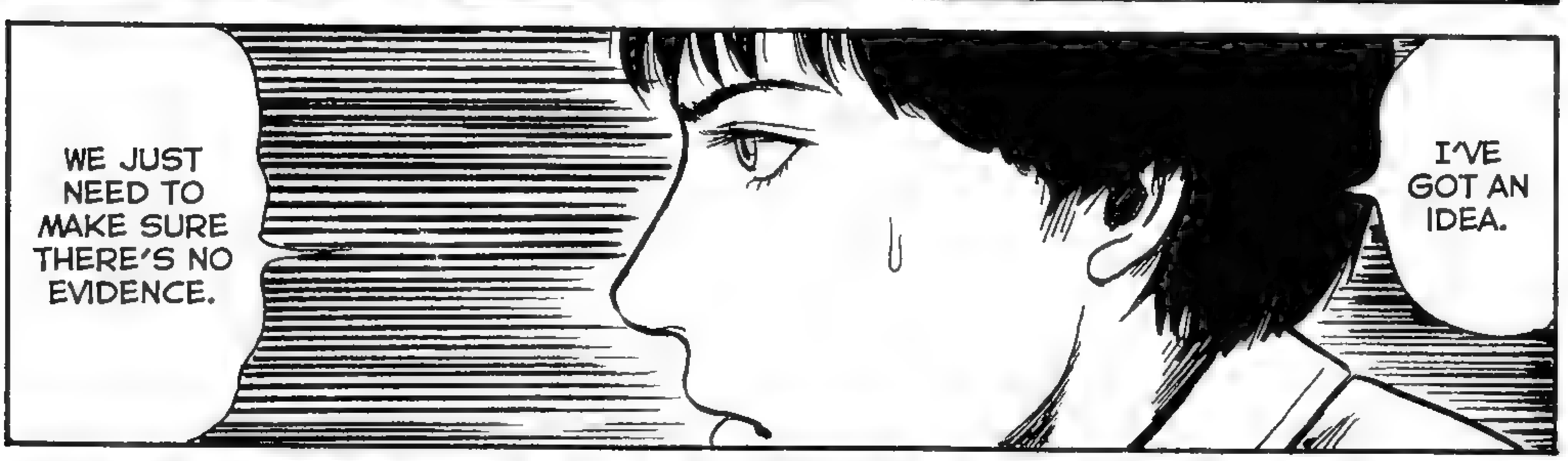
WE SAID OUR GOODBYES TO THE HEARTBROKEN FAMILY AND LEFT THAT NIGHT.

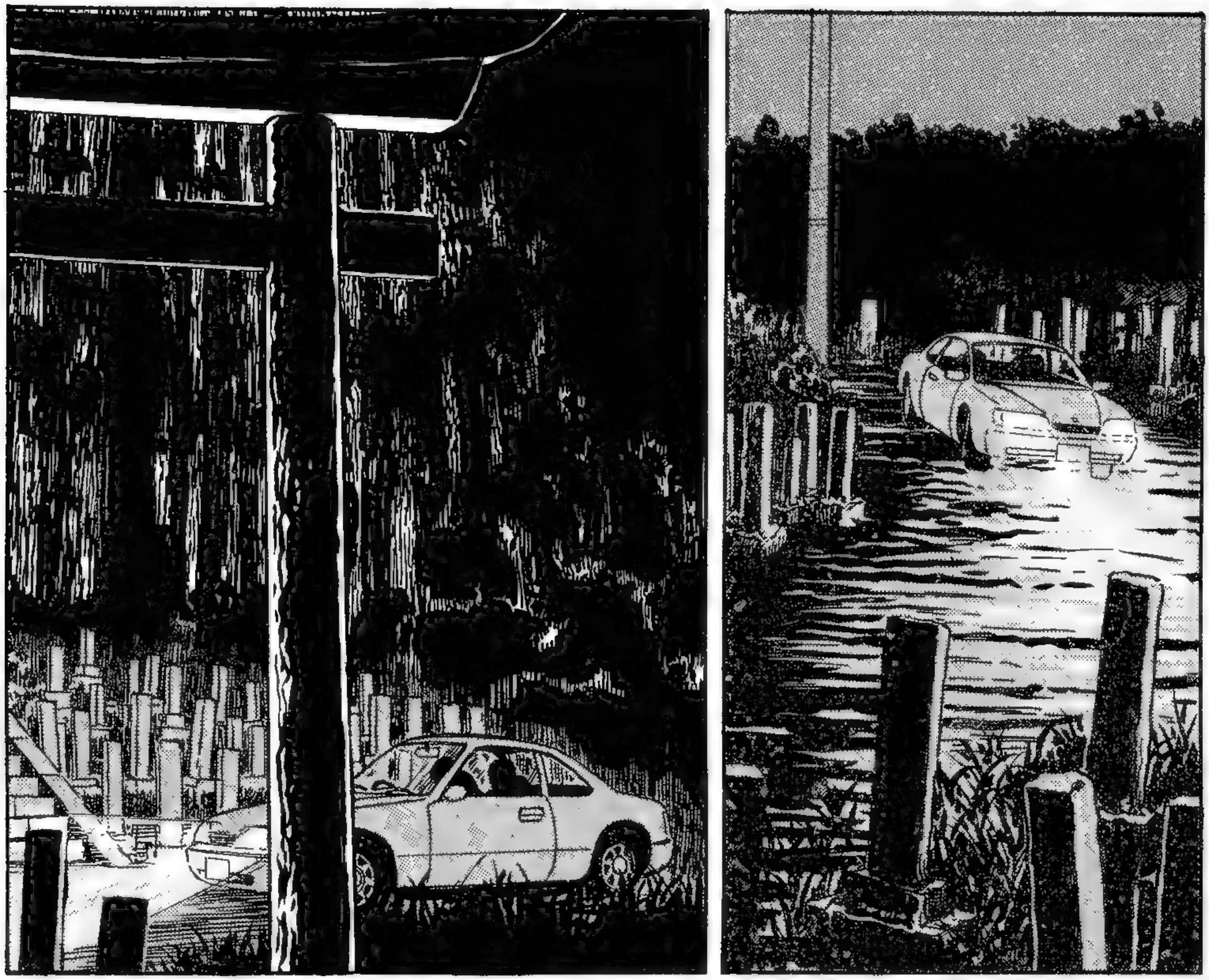
IZUMI. I'M SORRY, BUT I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING.

SOB SOB.

AND I'M SORRY WE CAME AT SUCH A TERRIBLE TIME. WE DON'T WANT TO IMPOSE ANY FURTHER. WE'LL HEAD HOME TONIGHT.


VRRRRR
DON'T WORRY.
TSUYOSHI, WE CAN'T KEEP DOING THIS. THERE'S NO POINT IN RUNNING. WE'LL NEVER WAKE UP FROM THIS NIGHTMARE.


WE JUST NEED TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NO EVIDENCE.
I'VE GOT AN IDEA.



YEAH. I KNOW WHERE WE CAN LEAVE THE BODY.

THE OLD WELL'S PERFECT.

THIS IS THE SHRINE FROM THIS AFTERNOON, RIGHT?

SO WHAT DO WE DO?

THE CAR'S RIDICULOUSLY HEAVY.

BUT SOMETHING'S BUGGING ME. I FELT IT WHILE I WAS DRIVING NOW.

I HAD TO REALLY HIT THE GAS TO ACCELERATE AT ALL.

IF WE THROW IT IN THERE, THEY'LL NEVER FIND IT.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GOING ON?

IT WASN'T THIS HEAVY YESTER-DAY.

...MAYBE THE BODY IN THE TRUNK'S CHANGING SOMEHOW?

DUNNO. BUT IF YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT IZUMI WAS SAYING...

BEFORE SOMEONE COMES.

ANYWAY. WE HAVE TO HURRY AND GET IT UP TO THE WELL.

KAUAK

WE MOVED IT YESTERDAY.

SO WE TOUCHED IT WITH OUR HANDS.

KACHAK

KACHAK

SHIN
SA

AAH!

GAAH!

TSUYO-SHI, WHAT IS IT?

S-SO *THIS* IS A BODY THAT FAILED TO FIND PEACE!

SHINAGAWA 33
SA 32-75

EEEA-AAAH!

AH!

SPLAT

IT'S TOO HEAVY!

COME ON! I CAN'T DO IT BY MYSELF.

KAORU, COME ON! HELP ME!

NO! I'M NOT TOUCHING THAT.

JUST KEEP GOING.

EEEEE! IT FEELS SO GROSS. I HATE THIS. AAAH!

HUP!

OKAY. ONLY A LITTLE FARTHER.

HAAH! HAAH!

KRK KRK KRK

THE NIGHT-MARE'S OVER.

NOW IT'S FIN-ISHED.

PHEW.

THE NIGHTMARE'S GOING TO CONTINUE FOREVER.

UNTIL WE DIE.

...BECAUSE WE WANTED TO RUN AWAY FROM OUR CRIME.

BUT WE CAN NEVER ACTUALLY GET AWAY FROM IT.

WE BE-TRAYED MY FRIEND ...

IT'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO OVER.

THAT CORPSE. I COULD HARDLY STAND TO LOOK AT IT.

BUT...

WHAT EXACTLY IS *WITH* THIS TOWN?

I MUST HAVE CAUGHT IT ON THE BODY.

OUCH. I CUT MY HAND.

THIS IS HARD FOR ME, TOO. BUT IF WE HADN'T DONE THIS, OUR LIVES WOULD HAVE BEEN RUINED.

KAORU... YOU HAVE TO UNDER-STAND.

NOW, COME ON! LET'S GO HOME!

WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

WHAT IS IT, TSUYOSHI?

SKRTCH SKRTCH SKRTCH SKRTCH

SKRTCH SKRTCH SKRTCH SKRTCH

KLAK

SKRICH

SKRICH

NOISE ?

LISTEN. IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM THE WELL.

SKRICH

YAMAMORI

AUNGGGH!
K-KAORU!

CRACK

!

THEY'RE THE FAILED TOMBS!

K-KAORU, RUN! IT'S THE CORPSES IN THE WELL! ALL OF THEM!

I-

IZUMI!

HE HIT AND KILLED ME!

IT WAS HIM!

TSUYOSHI YOSHI-KAWA!

HUH!

W-WHAT'S WRONG, TSUYOSHI?!

SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

IT'S NOTHING.

OH...

WHY ARE YOU YELLING ALL OF A SUDDEN?

THE GUILT OVER KILLING AYUMI, SHOVING HER IN THE TRUNK, HER FAILED TOMB...

THAT'S WHEN MY SUFFERING BEGAN.

IZUMI WROTE ME TO SAY THAT HER FATHER'S GRIEF WAS SO GREAT, HE COULDN'T GET OUT OF BED ANYMORE.

IZUMI SUSPECTED US. IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE POLICE CAME.

...LYING TO IZUMI AND HER PARENTS.

...THROWING HER IN THE WELL...

IZUMI... FORGIVE ME... I'M SORRY.

AND THE TERROR THAT OUR CRIME WOULD SOMEDAY COME TO LIGHT.

THE CUT ON MY HAND REALLY ACHES.

WHAT'S WRONG, TSUYOSHI?

DAMMIT! OW-OW-OW.

NGH.

WELL! IT'S INFECTED, ISN'T IT?

OKAY.

LET ME TAKE A LOOK.

HE WAS IN PAIN FOR A WHILE...

SOON, HE COULDN'T EVEN GET OUT OF BED.

OW-OW-OW.

TSUYOSHI'S HAND GOT WORSE AND WORSE.

IT'S TRAGIC.

HE WAS SO YOUNG.

...AND THEN HE DIED.

喪中

*IN MOURNING

PLEASE GO RIGHT AHEAD.

I'D LIKE TO SEE TSUYOSHI'S FACE.

GOOD-NESS! UNCLE SHIMADA.

UNH !

AAH, HE LOOKS JUST—

WHEN DID THIS...

W-WHAT IS THIS...

CREAK

CREAK

CREAK

WHAT IS HAPPEN-ING?!

CRACK

CRACK

EEE-EEE!

I DECIDED TO TURN MYSELF IN.

HE HAD FAILED TO TURN INTO A TOMB.

I COULD ONLY ASSUME TSUYOSHI WAS BEING PUNISHED.

-IIIIIIIIII-

BEFORE I WENT TO THE POLICE, I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE TO IZUMI AND HER FAMILY.

I HEADED BACK TO THE TOWN.

...PROVED THE FAMILY'S GRIEF WAS FAR GREATER THAN I'D IMAGINED!

AAH, BUT WHAT I FOUND...

...THREE TOMBS.

INSIDE THE SILENT HOUSE WERE A LETTER ADDRESSED TO RELATIVES, BOTTLES OF SLEEPING PILLS, AND...

TOMBS/END

仲間の家

なかま　いえ

CLUBHOUSE

THIS IS THAT HAUNTED HOUSE.

NO WAY. I'M STAYING PUT.

YEAH.

I SAW YESTERDAY THAT THE LOCK WAS BROKEN. C'MON, LET'S GO INSIDE!

BE CAREFUL.

OKAY, YOU WAIT HERE. WE'LL GO CHECK IT OUT.

OF COURSE I'M SCARED.

WHAT? YOU SCARED, YUKARI?

WE GOT ALONG REALLY WELL. THERE WAS NO PUSH-PULL BETWEEN US. I LIKED THE WAY WE COULD JUST BE TOGETHER.

CHIKAKO AND MINAE FROM SCHOOL WERE MY BEST FRIENDS.

HUH? COME ON, YOU! WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT BRAVADO?

YIKES. I'M SCARED, MINAE.

NO, FOR REAL.

DEFINITELY GHOSTS HERE...

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED.

THERE'S A HOLE IN IT NOW, THOUGH.

HEY, TAKE A LOOK AT THAT! THEY PUT A WALL UP ON THE STAIRS.

AND, LIKE, I FEEL A CHILL.

NOT A CHANCE. I'VE HAD ENOUGH.

WHAT?!

YOU WANNA GO UPSTAIRS?

OKAY, I'LL GO BY MYSELF.

DON'T DO IT, MINAE.

IT'S *FINE*. SEE YOU IN A BIT.

KREE

KREE

KRUUU

I FELT THIS CHILL, SO I LEFT.

SHE WENT TO LOOK UP-STAIRS.

CHIKAKO! HOW WAS IT? WHERE'S MINAE?

KSH

YOU THINK MINAE'S OKAY?

SHE'S TAKING FOR-EVER.

OH, YEAH. THERE'S A DOOR AROUND BACK.

YOU SCARED US! COMING OUT OF NOWHERE LIKE THAT!

MINAE!

SO? HOW WAS UPSTAIRS ?

THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN BLOOD.

WHAT ?!

PRETTY WILD. THERE WERE THESE *STAINS* ALL OVER THE WALLS AND CEILING.

AH, I HATE THIS.

WE SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE INSIDE.

YEAH. I FELT THIS WEIRD CHILL.

SHUDDER

SHUDDER

NO WAY.

I-I'M OKAY. LET'S JUST GO...

ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'RE BOTH REALLY PALE.

FIDGET

FIDGET

NOT LONG AFTER...

HYOOO

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HAD HAPPENED BETWEEN CHIKAKO AND MINAE.

I COULDN'T HOLD THEM TOGETHER ANYMORE.

EVENTUALLY, THEY NO LONGER TALKED AT ALL, AND WE STOPPED HANGING OUT AS A THREESOME.

WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE UP WITH MINAE?

ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT THAT AGAIN?

WHAT?

HEY, CHIKAKO ?

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW. ANYWAY, YUKARI.

I'VE BEEN HANGING OUT WITH ANOTHER GROUP OF PEOPLE LATELY.

WHY? WHAT HAPPENED ?

I'M IGNORING HER FOREVER. YOU SHOULD STOP HANGING OUT WITH HER, TOO.

LIKE, IT MAKES ME WONDER WHAT MY LIFE UP TO NOW HAS EVEN BEEN.

YEAH. I LOSE TRACK OF TIME TALKING WITH THEM. IT'S A WHOLE NEW WORLD FOR ME.

A GROUP?

UNIVER-SITY?

THEY'RE UNIVER-SITY.

YOU'RE HANGING OUT WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS?

OH, THEY'RE NOT IN HIGH SCHOOL.

HUH. I HAD NO IDEA. WHICH CLASS?

WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH?

I'M HEADING OVER NOW.

THEIR MEETING SPOT'S UP AHEAD. WE ALWAYS HAVE THESE AMAZING CONVERSATIONS THERE.

YUP.

PSSSSH

YOU'LL FIND THE REAL MEANING OF YOUR LIFE IN THE GROUP.

YES! YOU HAVE TO JOIN US. IT'LL BE GREAT.

I WAS CONFUSED BY CHIKAKO AND HOW ADULT SHE SOUNDED.

PSSSSH

THIS HOUSE IS WHERE WE MEET UP.

OKAY, YUKARI, THIS IS IT.

HANG ON.

H—

ISN'T THIS THE HAUNTED HOUSE?

COME ON ALREADY! LET'S GO IN.

YUP. WE HANG OUT ON THE FIRST FLOOR.

I'M GOOD ACTUALLY. SORRY. I'M LEAVING.

ARE YOU TURNING YOUR BACK ON OUR FRIENDSHIP, THEN? THROWING YOUR LOT IN WITH MINAE?!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU CAN'T GO HOME AFTER COMING ALL THIS WAY!

EVERY-ONE'S WAITING.

COME ON, YUKARI.

WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?

CHIKA-KO...

C'MON. THIS WAY.

SLAM

YOU BROUGHT A FRIEND TODAY?

HELLO, CHIKA-KO.

HELLO!

SHE WAS WANTING TO JOIN THE GROUP, SO I BROUGHT HER ALONG.

CHIKA-KO...

I DID, LEADER.

I'LL INTRODUCE YOU. THIS IS YUKARI IZAWA.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

...

IS THAT SO? WELL, THE MORE THE MERRIER. MY NAME IS NAOMI. NICE TO MEET YOU.

NOW THAT YOU'RE ONE OF US, I HOPE YOU'LL WORK WITH THAT FOUNDATION IN MIND.

...THROUGH INDEPENDENT THINKING, COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF OTHER STUDENT MOVEMENTS.

YUKARI, OUR GROUP IS WORKING TO TRANSFORM THIS MISGUIDED WORLD...

SNAP

AND THEN ...

CHIKAKO TOOK PART ENTHUSIASTICALLY, BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO FOLLOW.

EVENTUALLY, THEY STARTED SOME DISCUSSION.

!

DON'T YOU HAVE AN OPINION? YOU'RE JUST SITTING THERE STARING! WHERE'S YOUR PASSION?!

I JUST SAT THERE IN A DAZE.

SECOND-FLOOR JERKS? I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

ARE YOU ACTUALLY A SPY FOR THOSE SECOND-FLOOR JERKS?!

WHY ARE YOU SO QUIET? AREN'T YOU GOING TO FIGHT WITH US?!

I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT HAPPENS TO ANYONE FROM THE SECOND FLOOR WHO DARES TO SET FOOT ON THE FIRST FLOOR!

DON'T PLAY DUMB. YOU CAME TO SPY ON US. YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE!

AAH!

STOP!

OKAY. BUT WHY, DAD?

PANT PANT

DON'T GO IN THERE AGAIN.

WHAT? YUKARI, YOU WENT INSIDE THAT BUILDING?!

BUT THEY STARTED FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES AND SPLIT INTO TWO GROUPS. THEY PUT UP A WALL IN THE STAIRWAY AND CUT OFF ALL CONTACT. SO THE FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS WERE ACTING ENTIRELY ON THEIR OWN.

BUT THE GROUP HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN INCREDIBLY CLOSE, SO WHEN THEY STARTED FIGHTING, THEIR HATRED WAS ALL THE MORE INTENSE.

ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO, WHEN STUDENT ACTIVISM WAS AT THE PEAK, THIS RADICAL STUDENT GROUP MADE THAT HOUSE THEIR BASE.

THAT HOUSE, YOU SEE... SOMETHING HAPPENED THERE.

TERRIBLE, SIMPLY TERRIBLE WHAT HAPPENED AT THAT HOUSE. THE PLACE IS ABANDONED NOW, BUT NO ONE'S BEEN ABLE TO TEAR IT DOWN. SO HERE WE ARE.

ONE DAY, IT TURNED INTO ALL-OUT WAR BECAUSE OF A SUSPECTED SPY. THEY SHOT AT EACH OTHER, AND MANY STUDENTS ON BOTH SIDES DIED.

EXACTLY! AND THERE WERE ACTUAL GHOSTS.

CHIKAKO'S POSSESSED BY THE GHOSTS OF THESE RADICALS!

CHIKAKO'S BEEN GOING TO THAT HAUNTED HOUSE?

WHAT ?!

OKAY. I HAVE AN IDEA.

I KNOW THIS PSYCHIC. LET'S GO GET HER ADVICE!

MY DAD WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME, EITHER. BUT WE HAVE TO HELP CHIKAKO.

TRUST ME!

BUT I MEAN... GHOSTS?

RIGHT ...

WHAT DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD DO?

YOU MIGHT HAVE HAD A FIGHT, BUT YOU REALLY DO CARE FOR HER!

THAT'S GREAT! YOU REALLY ARE CHIKAKO'S FRIEND, HUH!

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU KNEW A PSYCHIC.

HERE WE ARE. THE PSYCHIC LIVES ON THE SECOND FLOOR.

COME ON IN.

SHE LIVES IN A SERIOUSLY OLD HOUSE.

SLAM

...

CLANG CLANG CLANG

THERE'S STAIRS TO THE SECOND FLOOR IN THE BACK OF THIS HOUSE. THAT'S HOW MY FRIENDS COME AND GO.

HEE HEE HEE! OH, YUKARI! YOU'RE SUCH A SCATTER-BRAIN. I GUESS YOU DIDN'T REALIZE SINCE WE CAME THE BACK WAY.

DOES SHE REALLY LIVE HERE?

TH-THIS PLACE LOOKS ABAN-DONED.

THIS IS THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

IF YOU SAW IT FROM THE FRONT, YOU'D PROBABLY GET IT.

AH!

WWWM

WWWM

WHAT? SO THEN THIS IS...

THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

YES.

AAAAH!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? THOSE STAIRS ARE A DEAD END.

YOU'RE A FRIEND OF THE SECOND FLOOR NOW.

YUKARI.

EEAH!

AAAAAAAAAH!

THD THD THD CRACK

SOME-ONE, HELP ME!

EEEEE! I'M STUCK!

HONESTLY, YUKARI! YOU TRIPPED?

I *JUST* FIXED THAT BARRIER, AND NOW YOU'VE PUT A HOLE IN IT.

HER HEAD'S IN FIRST-FLOOR TERRI-TORY.

RIGHT.

BUT IF WE PULL, ALL OF HER WILL BE ON OUR SIDE.

CH-CHIKAKO, HELP ME! MY HEAD'S STUCK.

IT'S LIKE SHE'S SITTING ON THE FENCE.

WHOSE SIDE IS SHE ON ANYWAY?

HEAVE HOOOOO!

HEAVE HOOOOO!

RIGHT. WE CAN USE ALL THE COMRADES WE CAN GET.

LEADER, HOW ABOUT WE PULL ON HER?

HEAVE HOOOOO!

HEAVE HOOOOO!

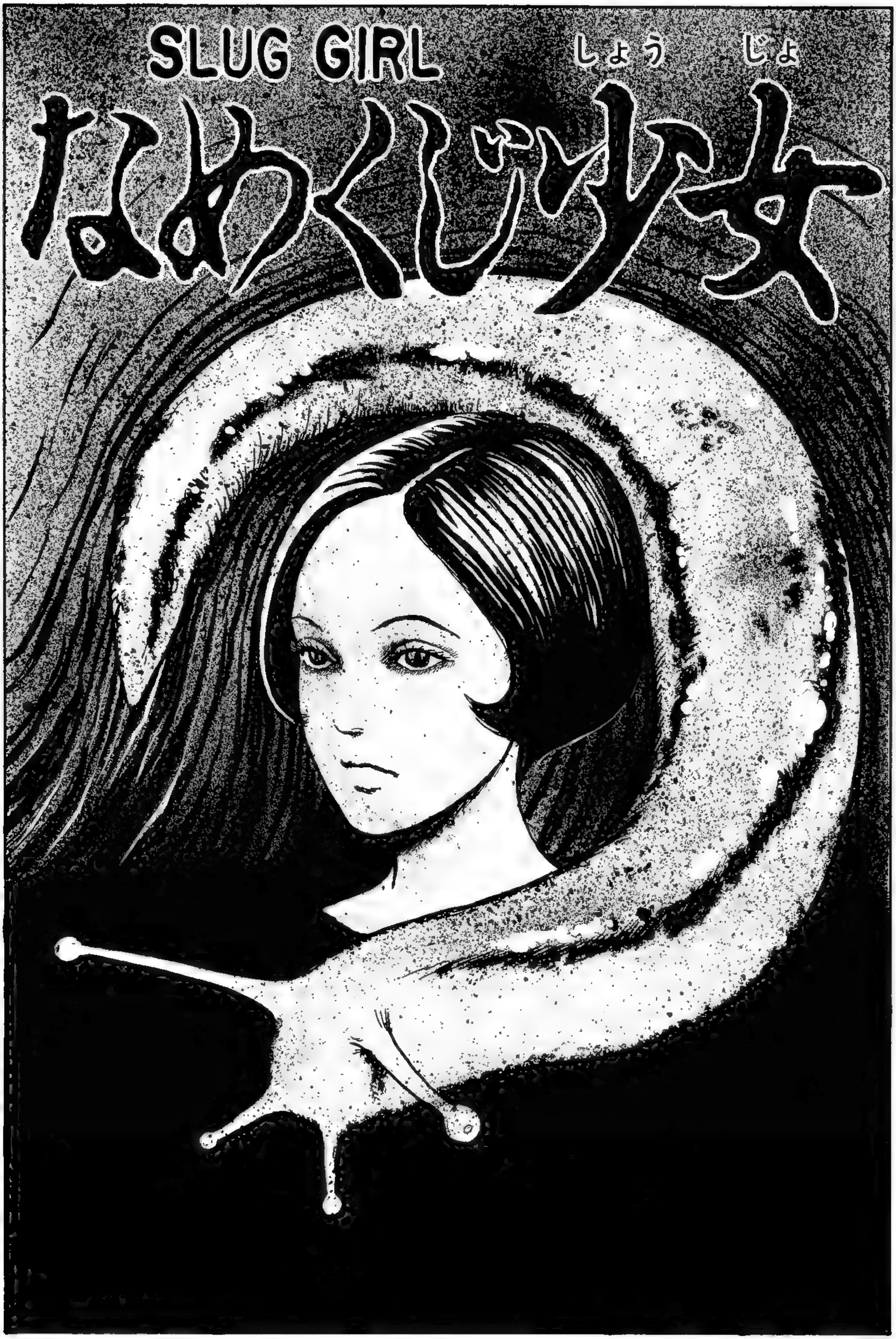
EEEEE! CHIKAKO! MINAE! HELP ME!

HEAVE HOOOOO!

HELP MEEEE!

HEAVE HOOOOO!

CLUBHOUSE/END


SLUG GIRL
しょう　じょ
なめくじ少女

SHE SEEMS TO FIND TALKING ANNOYING. AND WHEN SHE DOES SAY SOMETHING...

MY FRIEND YUKO USED TO BE FAMOUSLY TALKATIVE, BUT SHE'S GOTTEN REALLY QUIET LATELY.

HATEHY, I HABE HROUBLE ALKING.

HIGHT.

AND IT ONLY GOT WORSE WITH EACH PASSING DAY UNTIL, FINALLY, SHE STOPPED COMING TO SCHOOL.

...IT SOUNDS LIKE SHE'S TRIPPING OVER HER TONGUE.

MM. HUT I ON'T HEAHY KNOW WHA'S HONG.

ARE YOU SICK OR SOMETHING, YUKO?

THEY'RE NOT HOME?

HANG ON. THEY'VE GOT A TON OF SLUGS IN THEIR BACKYARD. I DUNNO IF I SHOULD...

I'LL GO CHECK AROUND BACK.

STOMP STOMP

STOMP STOMP

HUH?

IT'S BECAUSE THE SUN DOESN'T SHINE HERE. IT'S SO DAMP.

NO MATTER HOW MANY WE KILL, THEY JUST KEEP COMING.

STOMP

SPLRCH

SHP SHP

HELLO.

IF IT ISN'T RIE! HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE.

OH MY!

HEY! GIVE ME THAT SALT.

COME ON INSIDE.

YOU CAME TO SEE YUKO, THEN? SHE'S IN HER ROOM.

NOT FEELING WELL?

YUKO? WHAT'S WRONG?

YUKO! RIE'S COME TO SEE YOU.

KLAK

YOU HAVE A COLD?

WHAT'S WITH THE MASK?

SHAKE SHAKE

NGH!

THERE IS SOMETHING IN YOUR MOUTH, ISN'T THERE? LET ME HAVE A LOOK.

THE DOCTOR SAID IT'S A PSYCHO-LOGICAL ISSUE, BUT...

WHAT'S WRONG, YUKO?

AH!

WHAP

HANH!

AHN HAINE! HEAM ME AHONE!

(I'M FINE! LEAVE ME ALONE!)

THAT WAS NOT NORMAL.

YUKO SEEMED SCARED.

SHE'S USUALLY SO CHEERFUL. SHE WAS LIKE A DIFFERENT PERSON.

RIGHT. WE WERE STILL IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

...I SAW HER AFRAID ONCE BEFORE.

ACTUALLY ...

A BUNCH OF US FROM SCHOOL WENT OVER, AND SOMEONE GRABBED A SLUG TO SCARE YUKO AS A JOKE.

I WAS SURPRISED AT HOW AFRAID SHE GOT.

HER BACKYARD WAS FILLED WITH SLUGS BACK THEN, TOO.

SHE HATED THEM.

BUT STILL, THE CHANGE IN HER NOW IS JUST...

OF COURSE, GIVEN HER FEAR, SHE REFUSED TO GO NEAR THE BACKYARD.

AAAAAH

A FEW DAYS LATER...

AUN-TIE!

THE DOCTOR! I HAVE TO GET THE DOCTOR!

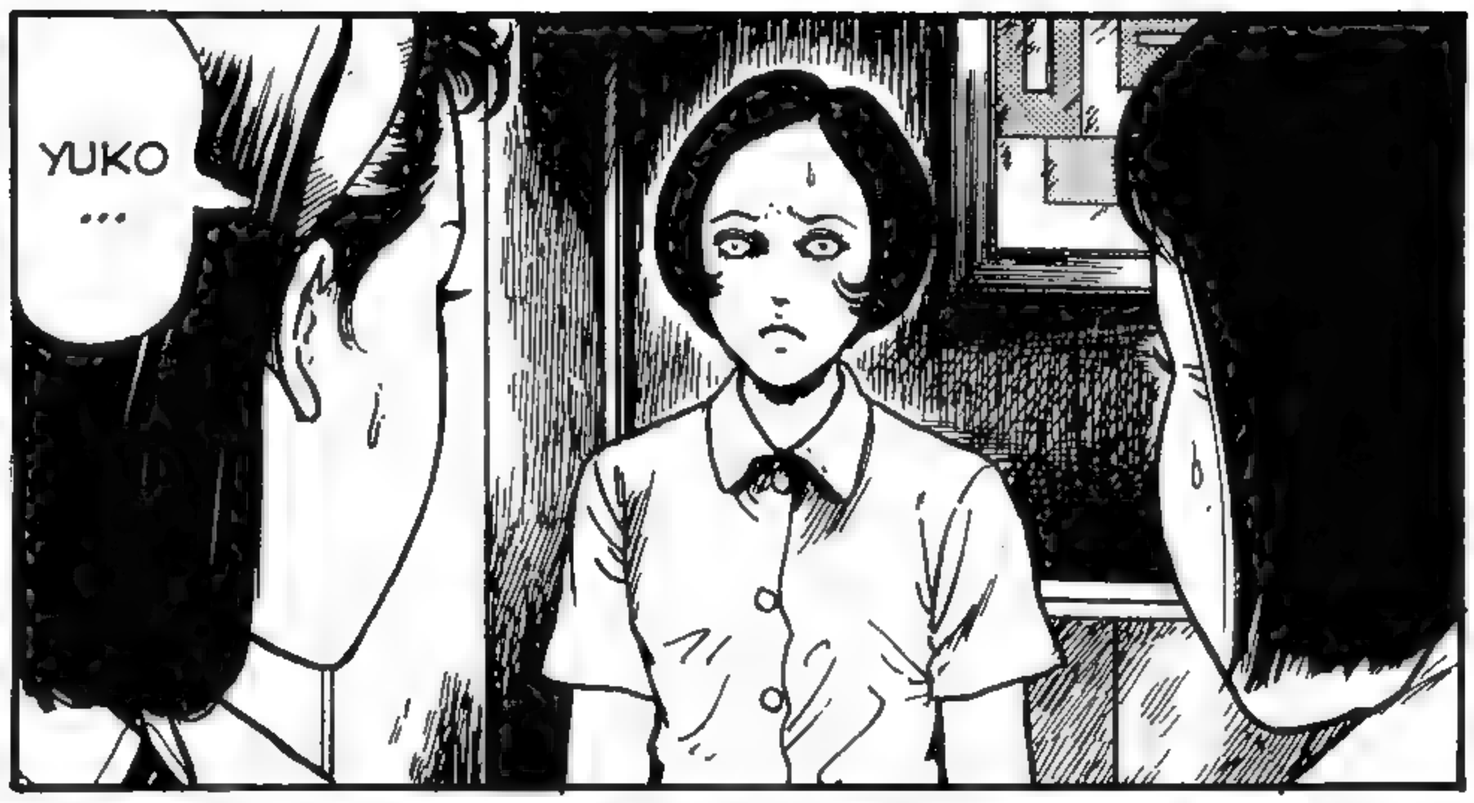
OH MY!

AH!

AUNTIE! WHAT'S WRONG?!

YUKO... YUKO'S TONGUE...

SNAP


YUKO
...

NGEH!

PLAP

EEEE!

JUST LOOK WHAT YUKO'S TONGUE TURNED INTO!

HEP HEEEE!

HAAH ...

AN ENORMOUS SLUG SHE HAD NO CONTROL OVER!

EEE-EEE!

YUKO'S TONGUE HAD TURNED INTO A SLUG!

EXACTLY!

GROSS! HER TONGUE'S LIKE A SLUG!

POOR YUKO! OF ALL THINGS, ONE OF THE SLUGS SHE HATED SO MUCH SQUIRMING AROUND INSIDE OF HER OWN MOUTH...

AAH, IT'S SO DISTURBING. APOLOGIES TO ANYONE IN THE MIDDLE OF A SNACK. BUT... BUT...THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED!

NO! STAY BACK!

HEP HEEEE!!

HEE... HEEHAAA! H-HEP HEEEE!

POOR YUKO FINALLY CUT HER SLUG TONGUE OFF WITH SCISSORS.

BUT BEFORE TOO LONG, ANOTHER SLUG GREW IN ITS PLACE. SHE CUT THEM OFF OVER AND OVER, BUT THE RESULT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.

AND I KNOW IT'S HEARTLESS, BUT I NEVER WENT BACK.

I'M SORRY!

IT WAS TOO MUCH FOR ME. I RAN AWAY.

SO I ONLY KNOW WHAT HER PARENTS TOLD ME.

YUKO'S DAD TRIED TO GET RID OF IT BY DUMPING A BUNCH OF SALT IN HER MOUTH, BUT YUKO COULDN'T HANDLE THAT.

KOFF! KOFF!

SALT

FSSSH

HON, GO GET THE SALT!

SALT'S THE THING FOR SLUGS!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I GUESS IT'S COME TO THIS, THEN.

HER FACE SHONE SILVER FROM THE SLIME OF THE SLUG CRAWLING AROUND ON IT.

NO LONGER ABLE TO EAT, SHE WAS WASTING AWAY.

IN A SEA OF SALT, THAT DAMNED SLUG'LL SHRINK UP AND DIE.

COME ON! WE HAVE TO BUY MORE SALT!

MIGHT BE TOUGH FOR YUKO, BUT IT'LL HURT THAT SLUG.

WE FILL THE TUB WITH SALT AND FORCE HER INTO IT.

YUKO, YOU JUST GET IN THE TUB.

OKAY. THAT SHOULD BE GOOD.

YOU CAN DO THIS!

FSSS

THEY WAITED AND WAITED, BUT YUKO DIDN'T SURFACE.

YUKO, YOU CAN DO THIS!

YOU HAVE TO FIGHT!

YUKO! ARE YOU OKAY? ANSWER ME!

HONEY, DON'T YOU THINK SHE'S BEEN UNDER TOO LONG?

THE PANTS ARE HERE, TOO...

GOODNESS. THOSE ARE THE PAJAMAS YUKO WAS WEARING.

WHERE DID YUKO GO?!

SHE PASSED OUT IN THE SALT!

NO !!

KRSH

FSSSSH

FSH FSH FSH FSH FSH FSH

WHERE ARE YOU?

FSH FSH FSH FSH

YUKO!

WHAT'S THIS?!

AH!

THEY THOUGHT THAT WOULD BRING HER BACK.

HER PARENTS HURRIEDLY RINSED YUKO'S HEAD OFF.

EEAAAAAH!

HER BODY... WHAT HAPPENED TO YUKO'S BODY?!

IT SHRANK IN THE SALT!

L-LOOK! THERE'S A TINY BODY AT THE BASE OF HER NECK...

ZZLSH ZZLSH

HOW-EVER ...

LRRM

IT HAS A SHELL LIKE A SNAIL, BUT THAT SLICK SLIMINESS IS THE HALLMARK OF A SLUG.

THE SLUG IS STILL IN THEIR BACKYARD NOW.

AND IF ANYONE COMES NEAR THE "SHELL," IT STARES AT THEM SADLY.

となりのまど

隣の窓

THE WINDOW NEXT DOOR

IT WAS AN OLDER HOUSE, AND IT WAS TOO CHEAP. MOM AND I WONDERED IF IT WAS HAUNTED.

MY DAD BOUGHT A HOUSE IN A NEW TOWN AND MOVED US HERE.

BUT IT WAS A SMALL PLACE, WITH ONLY ONE ROOM UPSTAIRS, SO MAYBE THE PRICE WAS APPROPRIATE, AFTER ALL.

WE'LL START WITH THE HOUSE ON THE RIGHT.

UGH. FINE.

HIROSHI, COME ALONG. WE'RE GOING TO SAY HELLO TO THE NEIGHBORS.

WHAT A LOVELY PLACE. SO MANY TREES.

THERE'S ONLY THE ONE WINDOW THERE.

I SAW THE OTHER SIDE BEFORE, AND THERE'S JUST THIS ONE.

THIS HOUSE IS WEIRD, *HUH*, MOM?

HOW SO?

NUMAGE

NUMAGE

OH, HIROSHI! QUIT PICKING AT OTHER PEOPLE'S HOUSES.

HELLO! IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU. WE'RE THE SAKAGUCHIS. WE JUST MOVED IN NEXT DOOR.

MAY I HELP YOU?

WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO LIVING IN THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD. HERE. IT'S JUST A TOKEN, BUT...

BING BONG

WELL, LET'S GO AROUND TO THE HOUSE ON THE LEFT.

I GUESS THEY'RE OUT.

NO IDEA. THAT HOUSE IS ALWAYS LOCKED UP.

I GUESS THEY ALMOST NEVER GO OUT.

I MOVED HERE TEN YEARS AGO, AND I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYBODY'S FACE.

BUT YOU CAN SEE A SHADOW IN THE WINDOW AT NIGHT, SO SOMEONE MUST BE IN THERE.

BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW IF THE NUMAGES OVER THERE ARE AT WORK DURING THE DAY?

WELL! HOW KIND OF YOU!

SHE'S A STRANGE ONE. I GUESS SHE DOESN'T WANT PEOPLE SEEING HER FACE.

THE RUMOR IS THAT A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN LIVES THERE.

WELL, WE RANG AND RANG, BUT SHE NEVER ANSWERED.

SO YOU DIDN'T MEET HER, THEN?

IT'S A BIT CREEPY.

KIND OF MUSTY IN HERE.

T M P T M P T M P

THANKS FOR SUPPER.

OH! ARE YOU DONE ALREADY, HIROSHI?

YEAH. I WANT TO HURRY AND UNPACK MY ROOM.

SSHK

I KINDA HATE THAT.

THE WINDOW'S RIGHT ACROSS FROM MINE.

AND THEN, THAT NIGHT...

ARE YOU ASLEEP THIS EVENING?

I HOPE YOU'RE WELL.

YOUNG MAN...

YOUNG MAN.

YOUNG MAN...

HM?

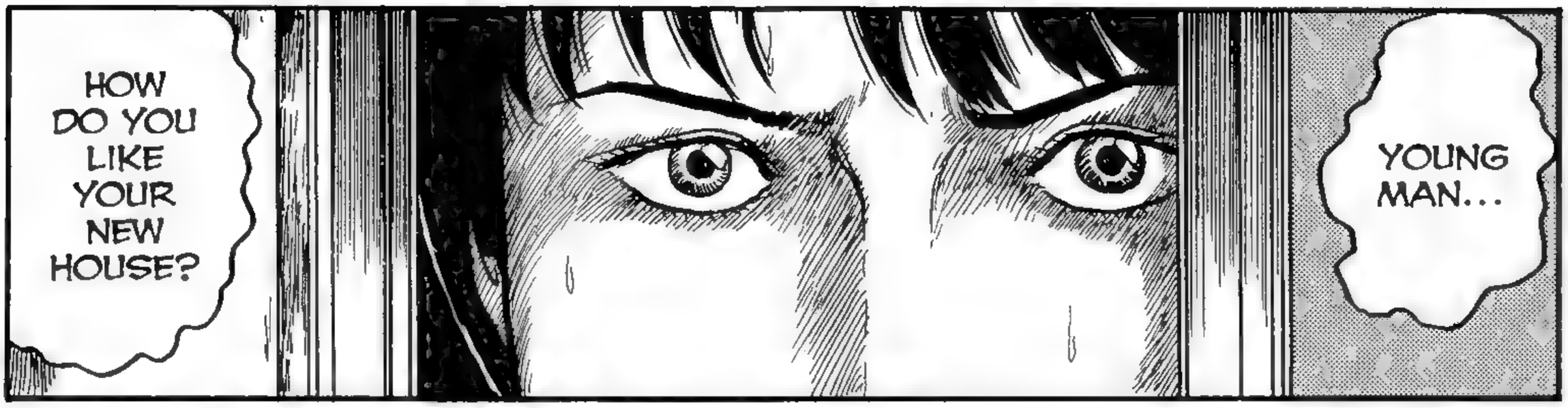
YOUNG MAN.

YOUNG MAN... YOUNG MAN...

WHAT?

...

SSHK


HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEW HOUSE?
YOUNG MAN...

HOW ARE YOU TONIGHT?
YOUNG MAN...

I'LL BE WAITING WITH THE DOOR UNLOCKED.

YOUNG MAN... YOU SHOULD COME OVER SOMETIME.

YOUNG MAN... YOUNG MAN...

W-WHAT WAS THAT?

KLAK

BUT THEN, THE NEXT NIGHT...

...I HAD NO DESIRE TO FIND OUT.

AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE DOOR WAS ACTUALLY UNLOCKED ...

IT WAS SIMPLY TOO DISTURBING FOR REALITY.

IT WAS TOO VIVID TO HAVE BEEN A DREAM, BUT THE NEXT DAY, I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT HAD BEEN REAL.

I WAS WAITING WITH TEA ALL READY.

YOU DIDN'T COME OVER THIS AFTER-NOON.

PLEASE LET ME SEE YOUR FACE.

YOUNG MAN... ARE YOU ASLEEP?

YOUNG MAN... HOW ARE YOU THIS EVENING?

YOUNG MAN... YOUNG MAN.

ALL RIGHT, I'LL COME RIGHT NOW.

PERHAPS I SHOULD COME VISIT YOU, THEN? HO HO HO HO!

!

WHAT DID SHE SAY?!

SHSS

W-WHA —?!

PLEASE GRAB ON TO THAT END. I'LL USE THIS TO COME OVER TO YOU.

YOUNG MAN, I'M PASSING OVER THE LAUNDRY POLE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

HNGAH!

AH!

WHAP

TUNK

KLAK

CHAK

KLONK

AH!

WAKE UP!

MOM! DAD!

WHAT'S WRONG?

THD THD THD

HIROSHI... WHAT IS GOING ON?!

SHE'S TRYING TO COME IN HERE THROUGH THE WINDOW! JUST COME UPSTAIRS!

I CAN'T STAY IN THAT ROOM UPSTAIRS.

THE OLD LADY NEXT DOOR'S NOT NORMAL!

AND THERE'S NO LAUNDRY POLE ON THE GROUND.

WHAT THE...WHY, THERE'S NO ONE THERE!

SHE WAS TRYING TO COME OVER! SHE MUST HAVE GONE OUT AND PICKED UP THE POLE.

IT'S TRUE, THOUGH. SHE'S SUPER CREEPY!

HE'S GOT YOU ROPED IN NOW, TOO?

BUT HONEY, IF THAT REALLY DID HAPPEN... MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL THE POLICE?

THERE ARE ALSO THOSE RUMORS ABOUT HER.

HIROSHI, IT WAS JUST A DREAM.

IT WAS REAL!

NO!

HIROSHI, IT HAD TO HAVE BEEN A DREAM.

BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE WOMAN.

IN THE END, AFTER SOME DISCUSSION, WE DECIDED MY PARENTS WOULD SLEEP UPSTAIRS FOR THE TIME BEING.

OKAY.

MM. RIGHT.

HOW ABOUT YOU GO BACK TO THE SECOND FLOOR ALREADY? IT'S QUIET UP THERE, BETTER FOR YOUR STUDIES.

NOTHING ELSE HAPPENED, SO I STARTED TO THINK THAT MAYBE DAD WAS RIGHT.

SHE WOULDN'T ACTUALLY SHOW UP TONIGHT, RIGHT?

YOUNG MAN...

YOUNG MAN.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?

I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE.

DAMMIT.

YOUNG MAN, ARE YOU AWAKE?

YOUNG MAN...

PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT. I'LL COME RIGHT OVER NOW.

YOUNG MAN... ARE YOU ASLEEP? PLEASE LET ME SEE YOUR FACE.

I'LL BE ABLE TO COME OVER SOON, OKAY?

YOUNG MAN, I'LL BE THERE SOON. MY HANDS CAN ALMOST REACH YOU.

WHEN I KNOCK, PLEASE OPEN THE WINDOW.

I CAN ALMOST KNOCK.

BUT... PLEASE WAIT FOR ME? I'LL BE THERE SOON.

AAH, IT'S STILL TOO FAR. I CAN'T REACH.

I WANTED TO CALL MY DAD, BUT DECIDED NOT TO. SHE WOULD OBVIOUSLY HIDE IN HER HOUSE AGAIN WHILE I WAS GETTING HIM.

SO I FIGURED I'D PUNCH HER OUT OF THE WINDOW IF SHE DID KNOCK ON IT.

HER VOICE SOUNDED ABSURDLY CLOSE. LIKE SHE WAS ACTUALLY GETTING CLOSER SOMEHOW.

THE KNOCK NEVER CAME.

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO

I GREETED THE DAWN WITHOUT A WINK THAT NIGHT.

THE PROOF OF THAT WAS...

BUT SHE HAD DEFINITELY BEEN TRYING TO GET INTO MY ROOM.

...THE WINDOW NEXT DOOR WAS STICKING WAY OUT!

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT MOVING SOMEWHERE ELSE RIGHT NOW.

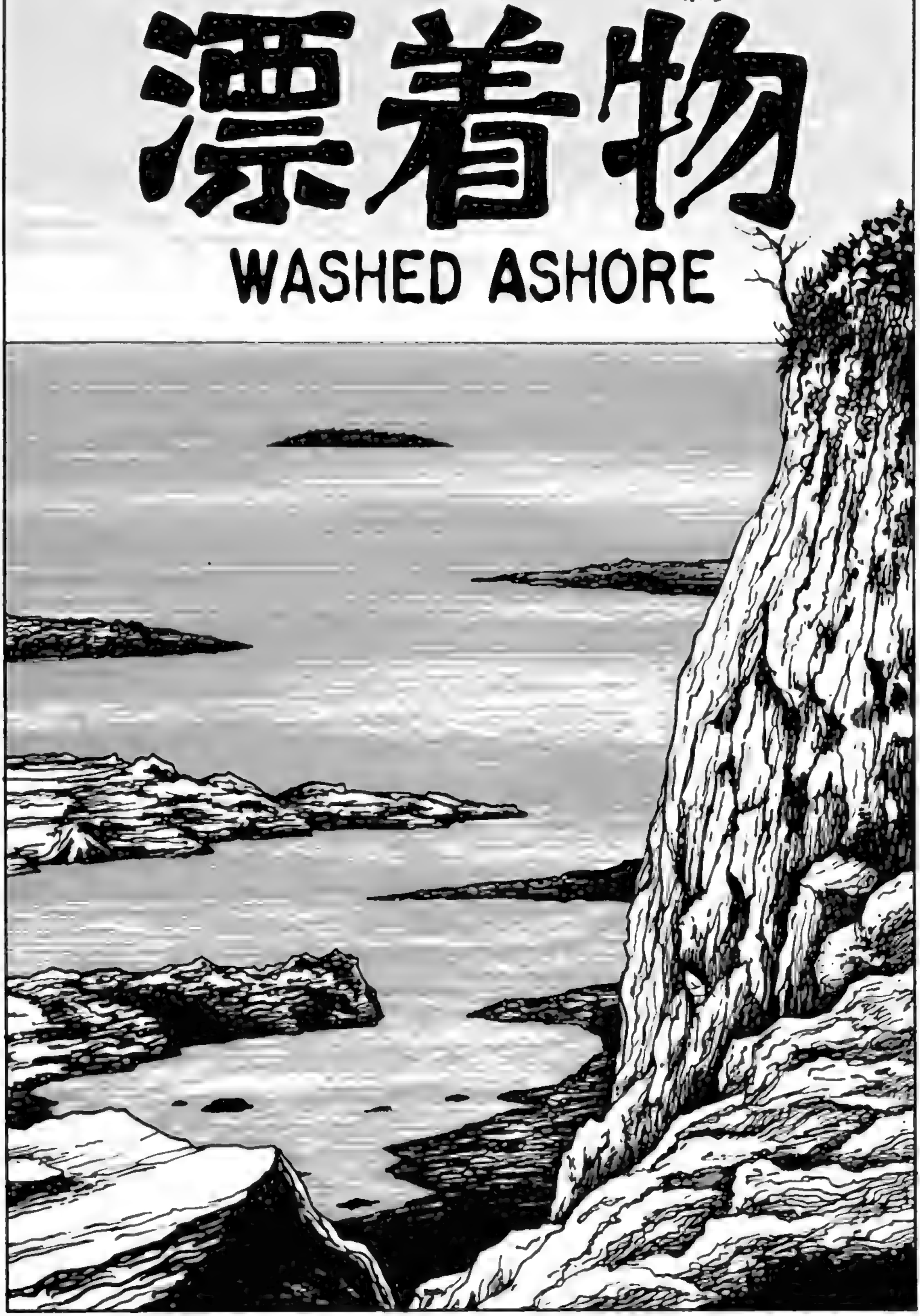
TONIGHT'S GOING TO BE DANGEROUS.

THE WINDOW NEXT DOOR/END

漂着物

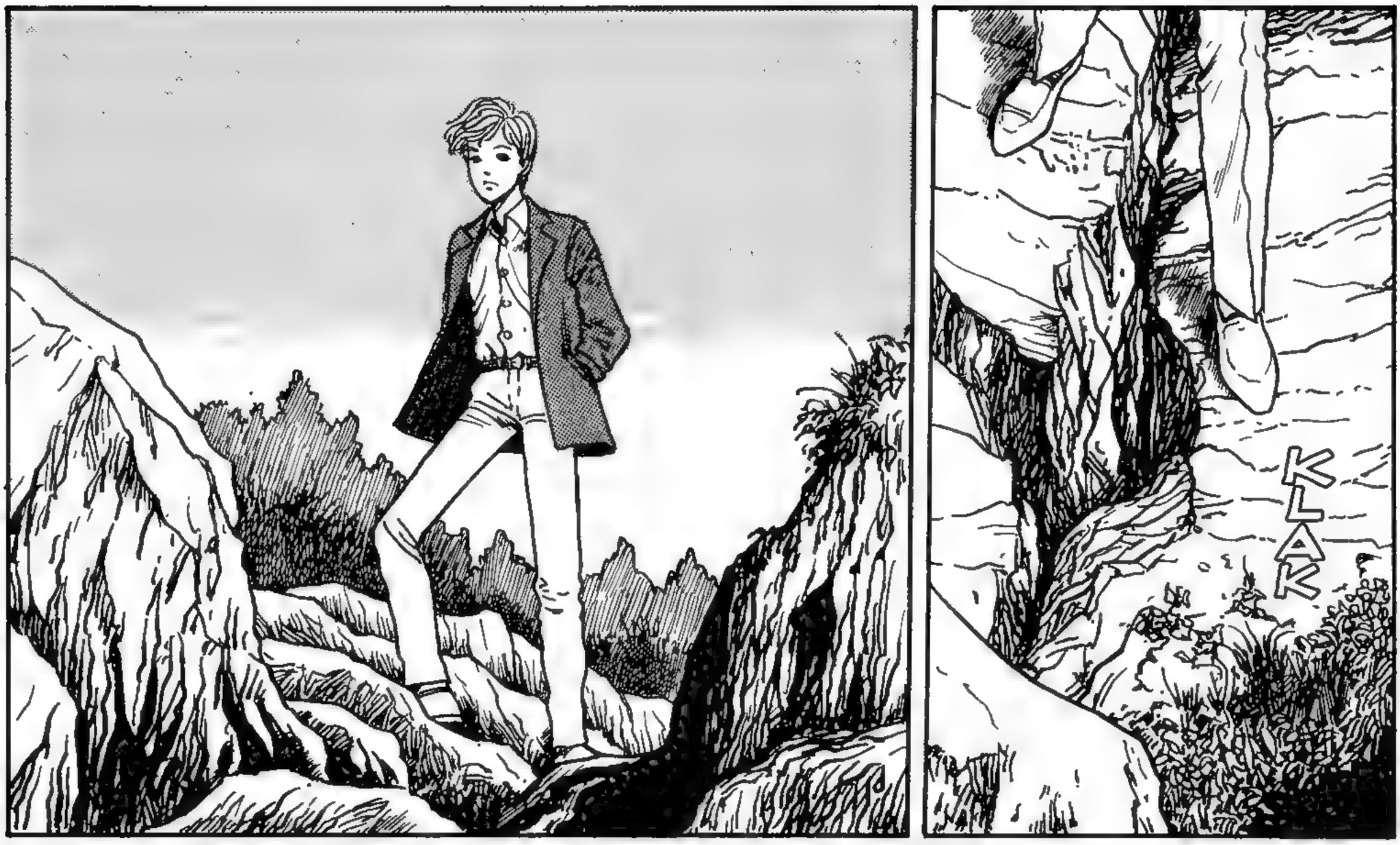
ひょうちゃくぶつ

WASHED ASHORE



THE CORPSE OF A MASSIVE CREATURE WASHED UP ON A BEACH ALONG THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

PSH PSH PSH



BY THE TIME I GOT THERE, PLENTY OF SPECTATORS WERE ALREADY CROWDED AROUND THE CARCASS.

ON THE NEWS THIS MORNING, THEY SAID A WHALE BEACHED ITSELF.

IT'S AT LEAST 30 METERS LONG.

MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF PREHISTORIC CREATURE.

THIS IS NO WHALE, THOUGH.

WE'VE GOT THE SCIENCE TO GO TO THE MOON, BUT THEY SAY THE OCEAN'S STILL MOSTLY A MYSTERY, RIGHT?

THAT HEAD IS DISTURB-ING.

...DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY I'D TAKEN HALF A DAY TO TRAVEL TO THIS PLACE. I HATED THE OCEAN.

I MYSELF ...

MY TERROR OF THE LIFE-FORMS OF THE DEEP SEA...

I HATED THE OCEAN PRECISELY BECAUSE OF MY FEAR OF SEA CREATURES LIKE THIS.

AND TO COME SEE THIS GROTESQUE MONSTER, OF ALL THINGS.

IT WAS A SMALL AQUARIUM INSIDE OF A RUSTED-OUT ZOO IN A CERTAIN TOWN.

AQUARIUM

AN AQUARIUM I VISITED AS A CHILD GAVE BIRTH TO THIS PHOBIA.

I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT STRANGE WORLD IN THE BUILDING'S GLOOMY SEMI-BASEMENT.

THEY LOOKED LIKE THEY HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND, FORGOTTEN BY THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE.

THE DISTURBING SPECIES OF FISH DRIFTING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WINDOWS BUILT INTO THE WALL.

THE DREAM IS ALWAYS THE SAME. I'M DRIFTING IN THE DEEP SEA.

SINCE THEN, I'VE OFTEN DREAMED OF THE OCEAN.

I ENCOUNTER ALL KINDS OF HUGE, CREEPY, PRIMORDIAL FISH.

MM-HMM.

THEY'RE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF A FOOTBALL FISH. PERHAPS THEY EMIT PHOSPHO-RESCE.

TAKE A LOOK THERE. THESE STRANGE PROTRUSIONS ALL OVER ITS BODY. WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY ARE?

JUST IMAGINING IT GIVES ME CHILLS.

SO THEN THIS ENORMOUS CREATURE SWAM THROUGH THE DARK DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN, GLOWING FAINTLY?

YOU'RE RIGHT. HOW UNUSUAL. I ASSUME THAT THESE WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE TRANSPARENT WHEN IT WAS ALIVE.

OH HO! IT HAS TRANSPARENT PATCHES ON ITS SKIN.

ALTHOUGH THEY'RE A BIT CLOUDED.

IT'S ALREADY STARTED TO DECOM-POSE.

BUZZ

IT DOES STINK, HM?

THIS IS THE DISCOVERY OF THE CENTURY. WE CAN'T LET IT SIMPLY ROT AWAY HERE.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE CARCASS NOW?

WE CAN'T EXACTLY LEAVE IT LIKE THIS.

THE THING'S GOING TO ROT EVEN FASTER NOW.

IT'S GETTING REALLY HOT.

KSH

STAGGER

HOK HOK HOK

YOU SHOULD GO REST IN THE SHADE.

IT'S NO WONDER. IN THIS HEAT, WITH THAT STENCH ...

YOU'RE SO KIND...

YES. I'M JUST A LITTLE DIZZY.

ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU SICK?

IT'S EMBARRASSING, BUT I DON'T LIKE FISH.

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. I FELT DRAWN TO IT, AND CAME. BUT I ACTUALLY HATE THE OCEAN.

YES. I SAW THE NEWS, AND FOR SOME REASON, I FELT LIKE I HAD TO COME.

DID YOU COME BY YOURSELF TODAY?

REALLY? WE'RE ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH, HM? SO WHY DO YOU HATE IT?

I ALSO HATE THE OCEAN.

IT'S OKAY.

OH! I'M SORRY. I SHOULDN'T PRY.

HE WAS ON THAT BOAT, AND THEY NEVER FOUND HIM.

MAYBE YOU REMEMBER IT. SEVEN YEARS AGO, A FERRY SANK IN A STORM OFF THE IZU PENINSULA. A LOT OF PEOPLE WENT MISSING.

THE TRUTH IS, A FRIEND OF MINE WAS IN AN ACCIDENT AT SEA.

HE WAS MY FIANCÉ.

I'M SO SORRY. WAS HE A CLOSE FRIEND?

I DOUBT HE'S STILL ALIVE. I'VE GIVEN UP ON FINDING HIM.

BUT SOME-TIMES, I DREAM OF THE OCEAN.

THAT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD.

JUST FLOATING THERE, LIKE A FETUS. I'M STRANGELY NOT HUNGRY. I CAN SENSE OTHER PEOPLE NEARBY, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME.

IN THE DREAM, I'M HIM, LOST AT SEA. I'M FLOATING IN THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN.

AND THEN I MEET THESE DISTURBING DEEP-SEA CREATURES. BUT THERE'S AN INVISIBLE WALL BETWEEN US, SO THEY SHOW NO SIGNS OF ATTACKING ME.

HOW STRANGE. I SOMETIMES HAVE A DREAM THAT'S VERY SIMILAR.

IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME.

THE DREAM SCARES ME SO MUCH, I FEEL LIKE I'LL LOSE MY MIND.

HMM. WE CAN'T HAVE THEM DISTURBING THE CARCASS. GO TELL THE POLICE TO KEEP THEM BACK.

THE CROWD OF ONLOOKERS IS GROWING.

?

HUH? WHAT?

HEY... THERE'S SOME-THING INSIDE.

WHAT? WHAT IS IT?

WHOA! FOR REAL?!

AH! YOU'RE RIGHT... IT'S...

TAKE A GOOD LOOK!

IN ITS STOMACH! I CAN SEE SOMETHING THROUGH THE CLEAR PART!

PEOPLE!

THIS CAN'T BE REAL!

AH! I CAN SEE PEOPLE OVER HERE, TOO.

PEOPLE! ITS STOMACH IS FULL OF PEOPLE!

A WHOLE BUNCH OF THEM!

BUT FROM WHAT I CAN SEE, THEY'RE NOT DIGESTED AT ALL.

IT'S WEIRD, THOUGH. FROM THE POSITION, YOU'D THINK THIS IS THE STOMACH.

TERRIFY-ING!

THIS THING'S A MAN-EATING SEA MONSTER.

LET'S CUT THIS THING OPEN, AND GET THOSE PEOPLE OUT!

BUT WHEN DID IT EAT SO *MANY* PEOPLE?!

LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.

CHATTER

CHATTER

CHATTER

KSSHK

KRRSHK

BLRP

FWMP FWMP

WHOAAA
...

POK
POK
POK
POK
POK

WHAT ?!

THEY'RE REALLY ALIVE!

GET AN AMBU-LANCE!

THEY'RE ALIVE!

HEY! THEY'RE MOVING!

GOURM

GOURM

GOURM

GOURM

PLAP

...TADASHI!

THIS IS...

AH!

POK POK

MY FIANCÉ! THE ONE SHIPWRECKED IN IZU SEVEN YEARS AGO!

IT'S TADASHI!

YES! THIS IS DEFINITELY TADASHI!

YOU'RE SURE IT'S HIM?

WHAT?

...

RIDICULOUS! THERE'S NO WAY!

BUT... HOW ARE THEY ALIVE?

DID THEY SURVIVE FOR SEVEN YEARS IN THE BELLY OF THIS CREATURE AFTER IT SWALLOWED THEM UP?

THE ACCIDENT ON THE IZU PENINSULA... DOZENS OF PEOPLE WENT MISSING THEN.

SO ARE ALL THESE PEOPLE PASSEN-GERS FROM THAT FERRY?

IT'S ME, MIE. YOU KNOW ME, RIGHT? TADASHI!

TADASHI! ANSWER ME, TADASHI!

SQUIRM

SQUIRM

GAH!

ガブ-ガブ

ガブ-ガブ

ガブ-ガブ

THEY'RE LIKE PARA-SITES.

...

HURRY! GRAB THEM!

AAAAH!

BUT CAN HUMANS ACTUALLY PARASITIZE OTHER ANIMALS?

I SEE.

YES. MAYBE THEY WERE ABLE TO SURVIVE IN ITS GUT BY ABSORBING NUTRIENTS THE CREATURE TOOK IN.

WHAT? PARA-SITES?

WHAT ON EARTH HAD THEY SEEN IN THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN THROUGH THAT TRANSPARENT SKIN?

IN LATER EXAMINATIONS, THEY WERE ALL FOUND TO HAVE PSYCHOLOGICAL ABNORMALITIES.

WASHED ASHORE/END

トンネル奇譚

THE STRANGE TALE OF THE TUNNEL

THERE'S A TUNNEL ON TOP OF THIS EMBANKMENT.

BEWARE FALLING ROCKS!

...LOOKING FOR AN OLD TUNNEL.

AFTER SOME 20 YEARS AWAY, I'M BACK IN MY HOMETOWN, AT THE FOOT OF THE "WICKED MOUNTAIN" ON THE OUTSKIRTS...

I CAME AT LAST, HELPLESSLY DRAWN HERE.

LIKE THAT EVIL TUNNEL WAS SUCKING ME IN.

THAT TUNNEL WAS WAITING FOR ME.

YES.

IT WAS LYING THERE WITH ITS MOUTH OPEN, WAITING FOR ME.

THE AREA WAS COMPLETELY OVERGROWN, BUT I KNEW THE TUNNEL WAS THERE ON THE OTHER SIDE.

KSH

I FLED THIS TOWN DECADES AGO. I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD STAND BEFORE THIS TUNNEL AGAIN.

BUT IT KNEW THAT I WOULD RETURN.

...GOES BACK NEARLY 30 YEARS.

MY OLDEST MEMORY OF THE TUNNEL...

...DISAPPEARED INTO THE TUNNEL, SUCKED INTO IT.

A WOMAN WALKING ALONG THE TRACKS...

AND THEN ...

SLAM

SLAM

OH MY GOD!

WE HIT SOME-ONE!

ANOTHER SUICIDE ?!

THAT WAS MY MOTHER.

YOU MAKE SURE YOU TAKE CARE OF MARI.

GORO, HONEY. YOU'RE THE BIG BROTHER, SO YOU HAVE TO BE STRONG.

NO ONE HAD ANY IDEA WHY SHE WOULD HAVE COMMITTED SUICIDE.

SOB SOB.

SHE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING YET, SO YOU HAVE TO SHOW HER THE WAY.

*IN MOURNING

THE WORDS OF MY TOKYO AUNT WERE SEARED INTO MY BRAIN.

BEFORE TOO LONG, THE TUNNEL WENT OUT OF USE.

A FEW YEARS LATER...

YOU WANNA GO EXPLORING IN THE TUNNEL?

HEY, GUYS?

WE'RE NOT SCARED OR NOTHING... RIGHT?

WHAT? YOU SCARED ?

WHAAAT ?!

HEY! GORO, YOU COME, TOO!

OKAY! THEN WE'RE ALL SET. WE'LL GO GET FLASHLIGHTS AND THEN MEET UP.

THAT'S WHY YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY COME!

C- C'MON.

THAT TUNNEL'S WHERE GORO'S MOM...

OH... HOLD UP.

WIMP.

HUH. SO YOU *ARE* SCARED.

I'M NOT SCARED.

O-OKAY ...

WE'RE GOING IN.

THEY ALREADY GOT RID OF THE TRACKS, *HUH?*

HEY, GORO? IF YOUR MOM'S GHOST SHOWS UP, TELL HER WE'RE COOL.

THEY ALL SORTA STAGGERED INTO THE TUNNEL.

MY DAD SAYS THE TUNNEL CALLED TO THEM.

WHEN THE TRAIN WAS RUNNING, IT HIT LOADS OF PEOPLE.

BUT, LIKE, IT'S NOT JUST GORO'S MOM, Y'KNOW.

THE ENTRANCE IS SO FAR AWAY.

LOOK.

AND THEN THEY GO AND BUILD A TUNNEL THROUGH IT. OF COURSE THERE WAS TROUBLE.

PEOPLE USED TO BE AFRAID OF THIS MOUNTAIN WAY BACK, SAID IT WAS EVIL.

REALLY?

WHERE'S THERE?

THERE?

UNTIL WE GET THERE.

HOW FAR?

H-HEY, HIDEH? HOW FAR ARE WE GOING, ANYWAY?

I DON'T KNOW! THAT'S WHY WE'RE GOING TO SEE IT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "SOMETHING"?

AND WE'RE GOING TO SEE IT.

TRUTH IS, OKAY? I HEARD THERE'S *SOMETHING* IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS TUNNEL.

SHUT UP! IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, GO HOME!

BUT WHAT COULD BE IN THIS OLD TUNNEL?

IT'S LIKE THERE'S SOME KINDA MARKS ON THE WALL.

HEY! LOOK THERE.

LIKE SCRATCHES. WHAT ARE THEY?

TRAIN ACCI-DENTS?

YEAH. MY DAD SAYS THE TRAIN TIPPED OVER A BUNCHA TIMES.

AH! ARE THESE MAYBE...

...FROM TRAIN ACCI-DENTS?!

...IN THE ONE DURING THE WAR, I GUESS.

YEAH. ESPE-CIALLY...

LOADS OF PEOPLE DIED.

THAT'S AWFUL ...

WHOA. FOR REAL?

DID PEOPLE DIE IN THOSE ACCI-DENTS?

...OVER HALF OF THEM DIS-APPEARED SOME-WHERE.

THE PASSENGERS TRIED TO GET OUT OF THE TUNNEL, AND WHILE THEY WERE WANDERING AROUND...

THERE'S A WEIRD STORY ABOUT THAT ACCIDENT, TOO.

OR SOMETHING LIKE BLOOD WOULD DRIP FROM THE CEILING AND THE WALLS.

...THE TUNNEL WOULD SHINE WITH THIS PALE LIGHT.

ON NIGHTS AFTER SOMEONE DIED OR DISAPPEARED INSIDE...

YEAH. AND SOMETIMES, TRACK WORKERS WENT INSIDE AND NEVER CAME BACK OUT.

DISAP-PEARED ?

AND THEN ...

I HEARD ABOUT THIS GIRL IN WORK CLOTHES, STANDING THERE COVERED IN BLOOD.

A GHOST TRAIN WOULD COME THROUGH, STUFF LIKE THAT.

KOJI! QUIT WITH THE WEIRD STUFF!

EEEEEEE!

AGAGAGA

WHAT, GORO?

WHAT'S THAT?

EEEAAAH!

AAAH! A GHOST!

H-
HEY!

YOU
...

AH!

WHAT'RE
YOU
DOING
HERE?

MARI
?!

A—

ARE YOU STUPID ?

I'M SCARED, GORO.

I... I DON'T KNOW. BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS HERE.

YOU CAME IN ALONE WITHOUT A FLASH-LIGHT?

WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?!

HIC!

HIC!

C'MON. WE'RE GOING HOME!

HOW DO YOU NOT KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE?

BUT MARI DOESN'T KNOW MOM KILLED HERSELF HERE.

MAYBE SOMEONE AT SCHOOL TOLD HER?

WAS SHE MAYBE... MISSING MOM?

THEY SAY THE TUNNEL CALLS TO PEOPLE.

IT IS A FACT THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE DIED OR GONE MISSING THERE.

SHE WENT INTO THAT TUNNEL ALL BY HERSELF WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT. THAT WORRIES ME.

UH-HUH.

IS MARI ASLEEP?

AND NOW EVEN MARI...

YOUR OWN MOTHER, TOO. THAT WAS NO SUICIDE.

SHE HAS A FEVER. SHE SHOULD STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL TOMORROW, DAD.

IT WAS A STRANGE LETHARGY I'D NEVER FELT BEFORE.

THAT NIGHT, I FELT SO HEAVY AND DULL. I COULDN'T GET TO SLEEP.

YOU KEEP AN EYE OUT, TOO.

ANYWAY. WE CAN'T LET MARI GO INTO THE TUNNEL AGAIN.

OKAY.

GORO!

I'M HOME.

SHE MUST HAVE GONE OUT.

SHE DID. BUT WHEN I WENT TO CHECK ON HER, SHE WASN'T THERE.

HAVE YOU SEEN MARI?!

SHE STAYED HOME FROM SCHOOL TODAY, RIGHT?

NO.

TO THE TUN-NEL?

NO WAY.

I'M GOING TO LOOK FOR HER!

I DON'T KNOW. BUT SHE'S GOT A FEVER. SHE CAN'T BE OUT WALKING AROUND IN THIS WEATHER.

STAY HERE IN CASE SHE COMES HOME!

KSH

KSH

KSH

HE'S BEEN GONE TOO LONG.

DID HE MAYBE...

BUT DAD STILL WASN'T BACK AFTER TWO HOURS.

HAAH!

HAAH!

HAAH!
HAAH!

THE FOOTPRINTS ONLY GO ONE WAY. SO THEY'RE STILL INSIDE.

SO THEY BOTH WENT INTO THE TUNNEL.

AND MARI'S.

DAD'S FOOT-PRINTS...

GULP

PLIP

KRCH

!

PLUP

WATER ?

BEFORE I KNEW IT, IT WAS PITCH-BLACK ALL AROUND.

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I WALKED.

PLUP

PLUP

PLUP

PLUP

WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?

THIS IS DAD'S.

THAT'S ...

AH!

D
A
A
A
A
A
D
D
A
A
A
A
D
A
A
D

DAA-AAAD!

PLIP

BWAAAZ

BWAAAZ

BWAAAZ

TCH!

PLIP

PLIP

...?

...A WALL BLOCKING THE TUNNEL.

THERE'S ...

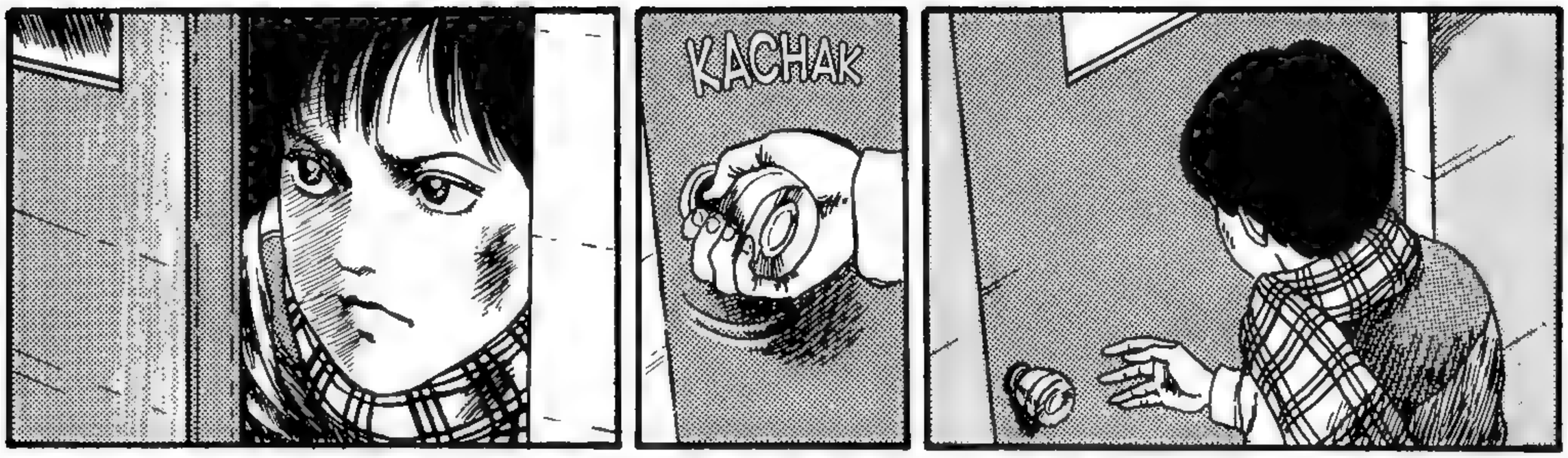
WHAT'S THAT?

東都大学
理学部 宇宙線観測所
COSMIC-RAY OBSERVATORY
COSMIC-RAY RESEARCH LABORATORY TŌTO UNIVERSITY

WHAT?

COSMIC RAY OBSERVA-TORY?

WHEN'D THEY BUILD A THING LIKE THIS?


KACHAK

MARI!

AH! THAT'S MARI!

...

DO YOU KNOW THIS GIRL?

WHAT IS IT, YOUNG MAN?

YOU MUSTN'T COME HERE AGAIN.

YOUR NAME'S MARI?

OH! IS THAT RIGHT?

SO YOU CAME TO GET HER?

SHE'S MY LITTLE SISTER.

WE HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.

YOUR DAD ?

MY DAD SHOULD BE HERE, TOO.

UM. SO...

BUT YOUR FATHER COULDN'T BE OVER THERE. WE WOULD HAVE NOTICED HIM COMING THROUGH.

MM-HMM. THIS IS THE CENTER, AFTER ALL.

DOES THE TUNNEL KEEP GOING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS ROOM?

HUH? THAT'S WEIRD.

I HAD MY FLASHLIGHT ON, AND THE TUNNEL'S A STRAIGHT LINE!

THERE'S NO WAY!

THE TUNNEL'S DARK. MAYBE YOU JUST DIDN'T NOTICE HIM?

IT'S SO WEIRD. I KNOW HE'S IN THE TUNNEL.

AND I DIDN'T SEE ANYONE ELSE ON MY WAY HERE.

YES, PROFES-SOR.

KOYAMA, TAKE THE CHILDREN.

YOU CAN USE THE TRUCK WE COMMUTE IN.

IN THAT CASE, GO CHECK THE OTHER SIDE, TOO!

PLUS, I FOUND HIS FLASH-LIGHT!

...

BLOOD?

IT'S... BLOOD? ARE YOU HURT?

HUH ?

HM? YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING ON YOUR CHEEK.

VRRRRRR

ALL RIGHT. GET IN.

I'LL CHECK THIS SIDE.

VRRRRRR

MAKE SURE TO LOOK IN THE TURNOUTS. HE MIGHT BE IN ONE OF THEM.

THERE'S THE EXIT.

PLEASE DRIVE A LITTLE SLOWER!

OKAY, SURE.

KRKRKRKRKRK

THERE'S THE TRACKS FROM WHEN WE CAME IN THIS MORNING.

THERE'S NO SIGN YOUR FATHER CAME OUT THIS WAY.

VRRRRRR

THIS IS SO WEIRD.

WE'LL TURN AROUND.

SUCH AN UNSCIENTIFIC PHENOMENON.

RIDICU-LOUS.

I'M SURE YOUR FATHER'S ALREADY GONE HOME.

LOADS OF PEOPLE HAVE GONE MISSING HERE.

MAYBE... MAYBE DAD DISAPPEARED IN THE TUNNEL.

INVISIBLE MICRO-PARTICLES.

BECAUSE THEY'RE RADIATION, THEY PASS THROUGH THE HUMAN BODY LIKE X-RAYS. THEY EVEN GO THOUSANDS OF METERS INTO THE EARTH.

A PLACE WHERE WE MEASURE COSMIC RAYS. THAT'S A TYPE OF RADIATION THAT RAINS DOWN ON US FROM SPACE.

WHAT'S A COSMIC RAY OBSERVA-TORY?

...

I DON'T REALLY GET IT.

WE'RE USING THIS OLD TUNNEL TO MEASURE THEM. IT'S A JOINT PROJECT WITH SEVERAL UNIVERSITIES.

SO THEY COME THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN AND RADIATE IN HERE, TOO.

VRRRRRRR

WE ONLY STARTED RECENTLY. BUT THE MACHINES...

THIS TUNNEL IS QUITE STRANGE, HM?

...ARE ALREADY BREAKING DOWN AND GIVING US STRANGE READINGS. SO EVERY-ONE'S ON EDGE.

EACH TIME, I GOT A CALL FROM THE OBSERVATORY AND HAD TO GO AND GET HER.

MARI WANDERED INTO THE TUNNEL AGAIN OVER AND OVER.

DAD REALLY WAS GONE.

I COULD ONLY ASSUME HE DISAP-PEARED IN THE TUNNEL.

SOB SOB.

GORO, I'M SCARED.

HIC... HIC...

WHY DO I KEEP COMING HERE? I DON'T EVEN KNOW.

RIGHT ...

I'M SURE IT MUST BE HARD FOR JUST THE TWO OF YOU. AND IF YOU LEAVE, MARI WILL STOP COMING INTO THE TUNNEL.

WHY DON'T YOU STAY WITH THEM UNTIL YOUR FATHER'S FOUND?

GORO, DO YOU HAVE RELA-TIVES ELSE-WHERE?

I CAN'T SEE ANY ISSUES WITH THE MACHINES, BUT THE DATA'S A MESS.

WE CAN'T GET ANY WORK DONE LIKE THIS!

BANG

OH, FOR PETE'S SAKE! WHAT IS WRONG?!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

PROFES-SOR!

AH!

STAGGER

BUT... I'VE BEEN STRANGELY TIRED SINCE WE STARTED WORKING IN THIS TUNNEL.

YES... I'M FINE.

PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!

P- PROFESSOR !!

...I'VE ALSO BEEN STRANGE-LY LIST-LESS.

PROFES-SOR. THE TRUTH IS... SINCE WE STARTED COMING HERE...

IT'S THE COMMEMO-RATIVE PICTURE WE TOOK THE OTHER DAY.

THIS PHOTO!

LOOK CLOSE-LY.

IT'S LIKE THERE ARE THINGS FLYING AROUND THE TUNNEL, RIGHT?

...ISHI-KURA?

WHAT IS THIS...

LIKE HUMAN-SHAPED SOMETHINGS ARE WHIZZING THROUGH THE TUNNEL AT INCREDIBLE SPEED.

DON'T THEY LOOK LIKE PEOPLE?

AND THEY'RE PASSING THROUGH OUR BODIES LIKE X-RAYS.

LOOK. THEY'RE COMING OUT OF THE WALLS AND DISAPPEAR-ING INTO THEM.

WHY WOULD THEY BE IN THE PHOTO?

MM-HMM. THESE DO INDEED LOOK LIKE PEOPLE.

SPIRITS?! RIDICU-LOUS!

WHAT ON EARTH ARE THEY? COULD THEY BE SPIRITS?

PERHAPS IT'S AKIN TO BEING BATHED IN LARGE AMOUNTS OF RADIATION.

IF THESE ACTUALLY EXIST MATERIALLY ...

...THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY WE HAVEN'T BEEN FEELING WELL.

WHAT IF THEY'RE STILL FLYING AROUND THE TUNNEL RIGHT NOW, AND WE JUST CAN'T SEE THEM WITH OUR EYES?

WHAT IF OUR DATA ANOMALIES ARE ACTUALLY MEASUREMENTS OF THESE THINGS?

PROFESSOR. WHAT IF THESE ARE GOING THROUGH OUR BODIES?

AND SO THE COSMIC RAY OBSER-VATORY WAS SHUT DOWN.

IT MAY BE DANGEROUS TO STAY TOO LONG IN THIS TUNNEL.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT...AT ANY RATE...

NOT THE TUNNEL AGAIN?

WHERE'D MARI GET TO?

RIGHT AROUND THE TIME WE'D FINISHED PACK-ING...

BEFORE LONG, MY SISTER AND I WERE TAKEN IN BY OUR AUNT IN TOKYO.

RRRING

YOU HAVE TO COME RIGHT AWAY!

SOMETHING... TERRIBLE'S HAPPENED...

OH, MS. KOYAMA?

GORO? IT'S ME. KOYAMA FROM THE COSMIC RAY OBSERVA-TORY.

HELLO ?

HELLO? WHAT'S GOING ON?

KLIK

EEA-AAAH!

TMP TMP TMP

THD THD THD THD THD THD

WHAT COULD SHE...

I THOUGHT THE OBSERVA-TORY WAS CLOSED?

HAAH!

HAAH!

THDTHDTHDTHD

TMP TMP TMP TMP

BANG

MS. KOYAMA!

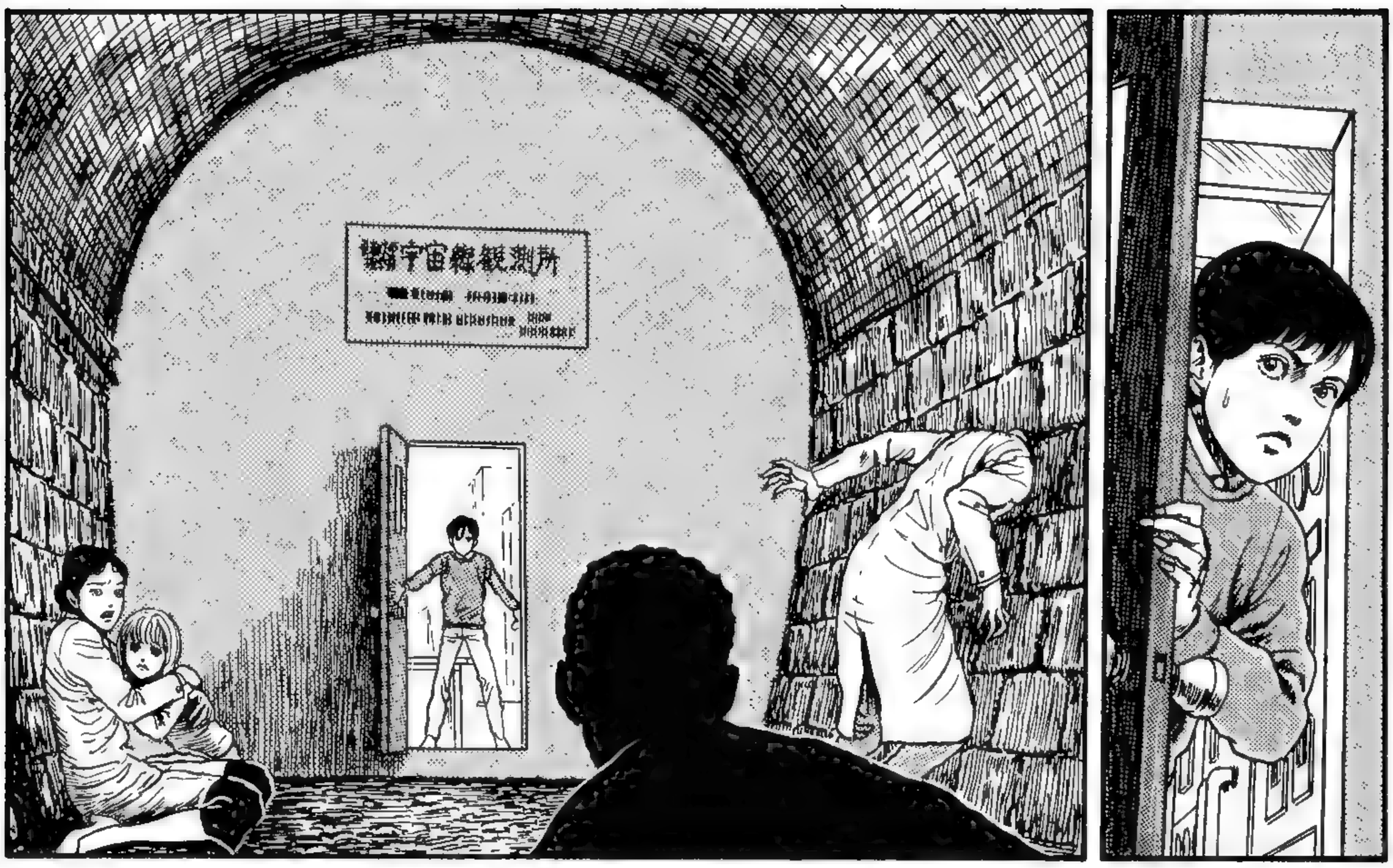
HAAH!

HAAH!

THE DOOR ON THE OTHER SIDE'S OPEN.

WHERE ARE YOU?!

MS. KOYAMA!


宇宙観測所

THEY'RE GOING THROUGH THE WALLS!

I CAN SEE THEM. I CAN ACTUALLY SEE THEM. THERE ARE PEOPLE FLYING AROUND INSIDE THE TUNNEL.

THE PROFES-SOR AND ISHIKURA ARE...

GORO!

THE EARTH IS SO HARD— WHY ARE WE BEING ABSORBED BY IT?

S-SOMEONE TELL ME... WHY? WHY?!

I'M SLIPPING INTO THE GROUND. IMPOSSIBLE...

W-WE ARE, TOO.

AAAAAAAAH!

WE...

EVEN THOUGH THE OBSERVATORY'S CLOSED. IT WAS LIKE WE WERE PULLED IN.

WE CAME HERE AGAIN.

THEY'RE GONE ...

...

AAAAH!

I'M SCAA-ARED!

GORO, I'M SCARED!

I'M SCARED!

EEE!

SCAA-ARED!

MARI!

MARI !!

MARI!

MARI!

MS. KOYAMA.

WE HAVE TO RUN. WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE TUNNEL!

GORO ...

BLOOD ...

HAAH!

HAAH! HAAH!

HAAH! HAAH!

HAAH!

HUH?

SOME-THING'S COMING AFTER US!

GORO!

YOU HAVE TO HURRY!

HAAH!

MS. KOYAMA! HURRY!

HAAH!

HAAH!

GOROOO

PLIP

PLIP

EEEAH!

PLUP

DON'T LEAVE US!

KO-YAMA!

ZSH ZSH ZSH

MS. KOYA-MA!

EEEE!

AS I RACED THROUGH THE TUNNEL, THE THINGS I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO SEE BECAME VISIBLE.

I RAN. I ABANDONED MY SISTER IN MY SHEER TERROR.

HELP MEEE!

ZSH ZSH ZSH ZSH

GO-ROOO!

THEY WERE THE MANY, MANY PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN ABSORBED BY THIS TUNNEL.

...THE STONE PRISON OF THE EVIL MOUNTAIN, TRYING TO ESCAPE.

TO ME, THEY LOOKED LIKE INSECTS BOUNCING AROUND...

THEY SHOT THROUGH MY BODY WITHOUT MERCY.

I GREW UP AT MY AUNT'S HOUSE IN TOKYO, BUT THE PAIN IN MY HEART WAS NEVER-ENDING.

IF I DID, PEOPLE WOULD FIND OUT I ABANDONED MY LITTLE SISTER.

I DIDN'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THE TUNNEL.

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE ELSE WENT MISSING. THAT TOWN REALLY IS CURSED.

GORO.

...FOR NO REASON.

ON TOP OF THAT, I WAS TIRED AND LISTLESS ...

BUT SHE PASSED AWAY RECENTLY.

UNABLE TO GET A JOB AND LIVE A PROPER LIFE, I STAYED LOCKED UP IN MY AUNT'S HOUSE.

EVERYONE GETS SUCKED INTO THAT TUNNEL!

IT'S THE TUNNEL. WHY DOESN'T ANYONE INVESTIGATE THE TUNNEL?

EVERY TIME MY AUNT GAVE ME NEWS LIKE THAT, I SCREAMED IN MY HEART.

IF THEY HAD, IT WAS INTO THE TUNNEL.

THE PLACE HAD GOTTEN QUITE SAD IN THE DECADES SINCE I LEFT.

IT WAS LIKE MOST OF THE RESIDENTS HAD VANISHED.

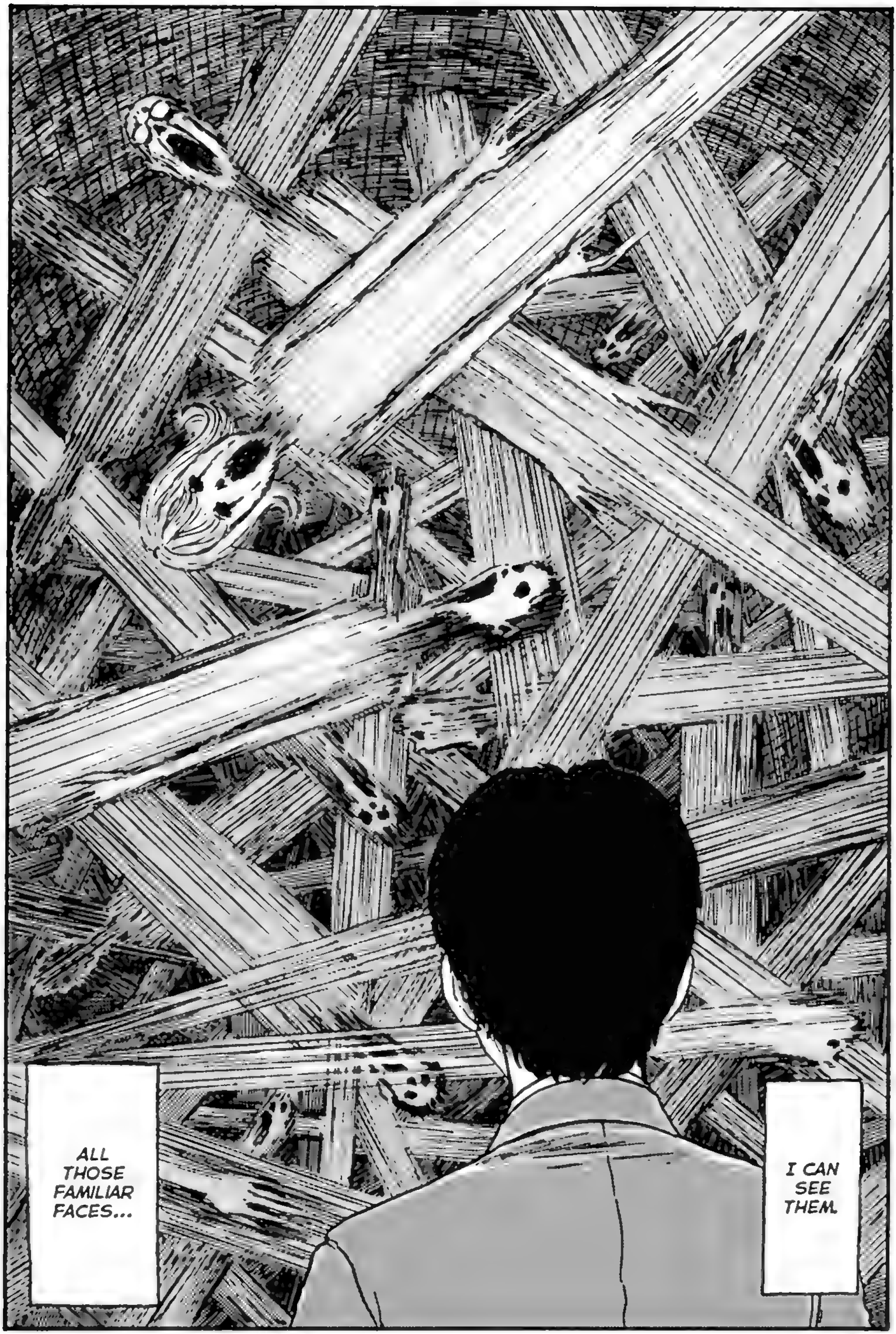
AND BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS WALKING INTO MY HOMETOWN.

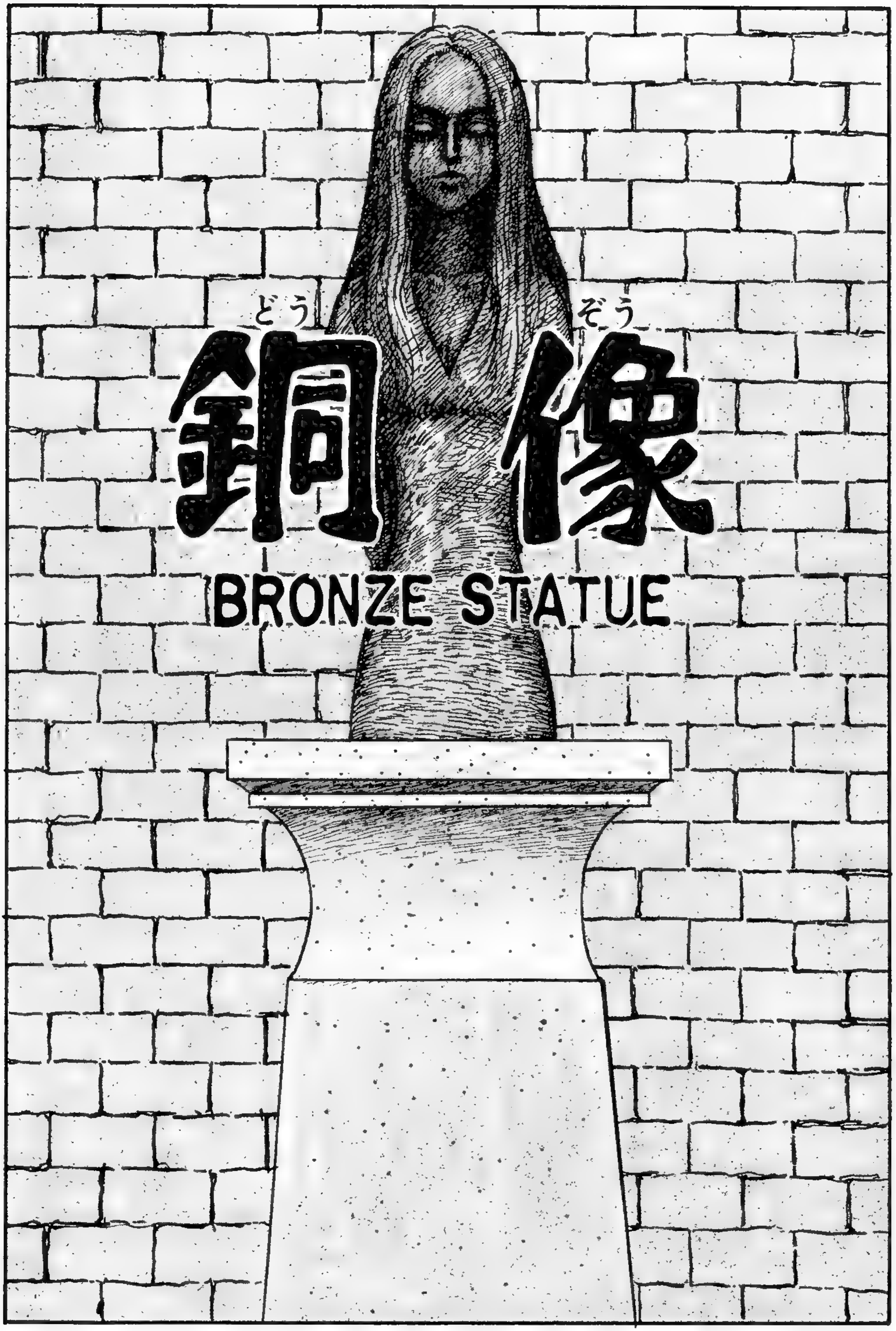
AFTER 20 YEARS, THE TUNNEL LOOKED EVEN MORE REPULSIVE.

KISH

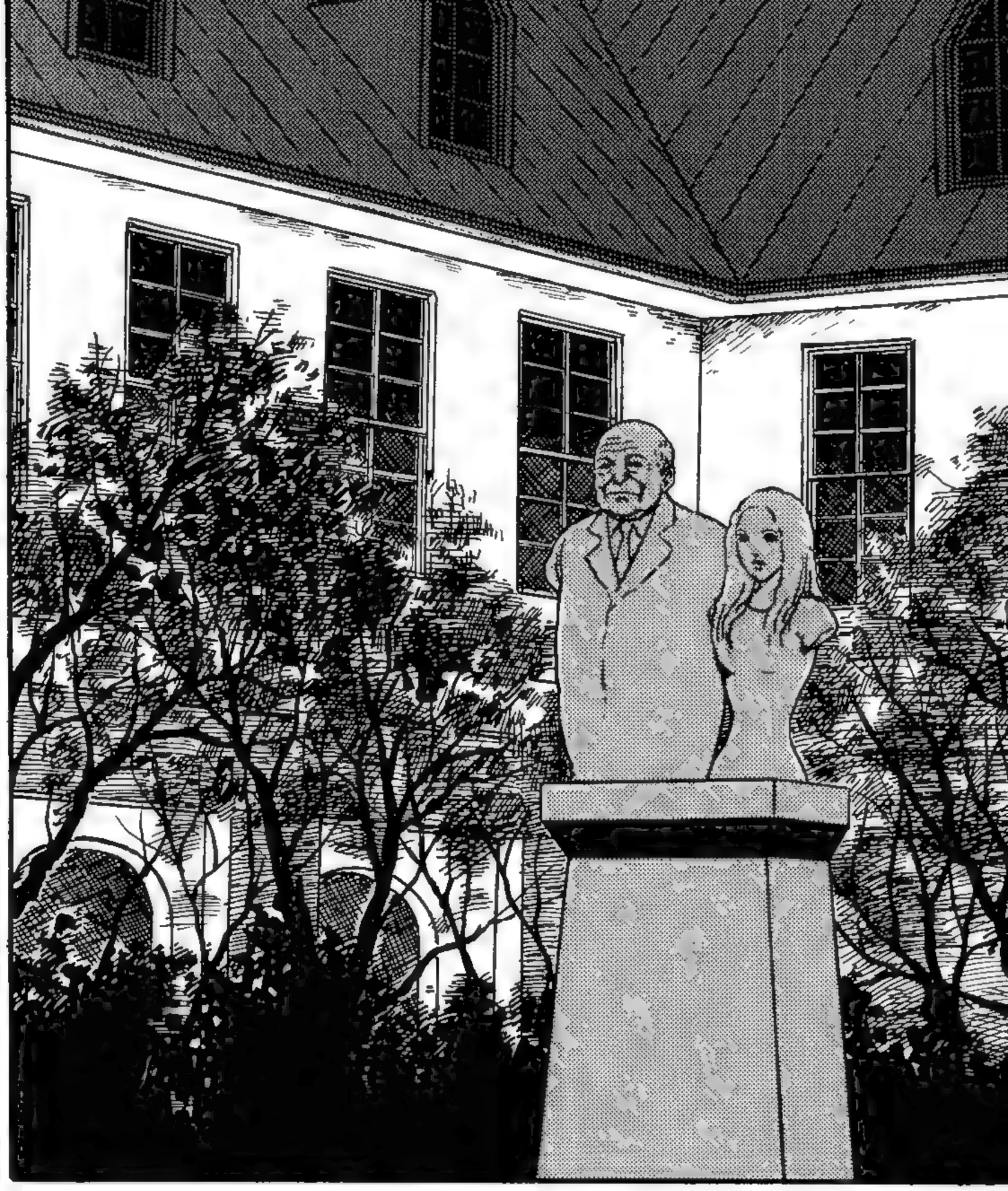
THE PEOPLE SWALLOWED UP BY THAT TUNNEL COULD NEVER ESCAPE THE STONE SHELL OF THE MOUNTAIN.

NOR COULD I.

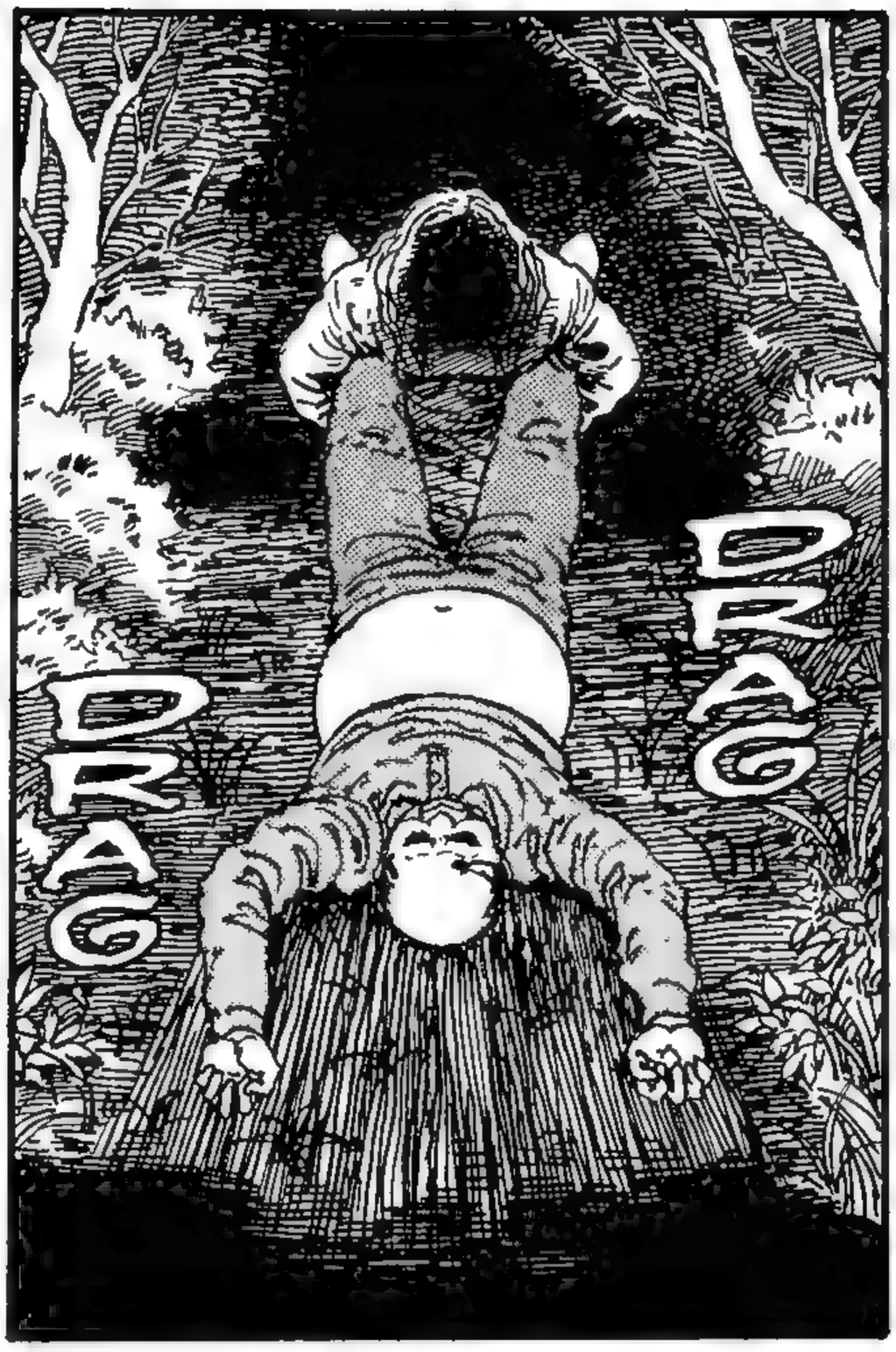

ALL THOSE FAMILIAR FACES...
I CAN SEE THEM.


どう
ぞう
銅像
BRONZE STATUE

DRAG
DRAG



I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
DRAG
THIS IS WHAT YOU GET FOR INSULTING ME.


DRAG

DRAG

DRAG

BRBL BRBL BRBL BRBL

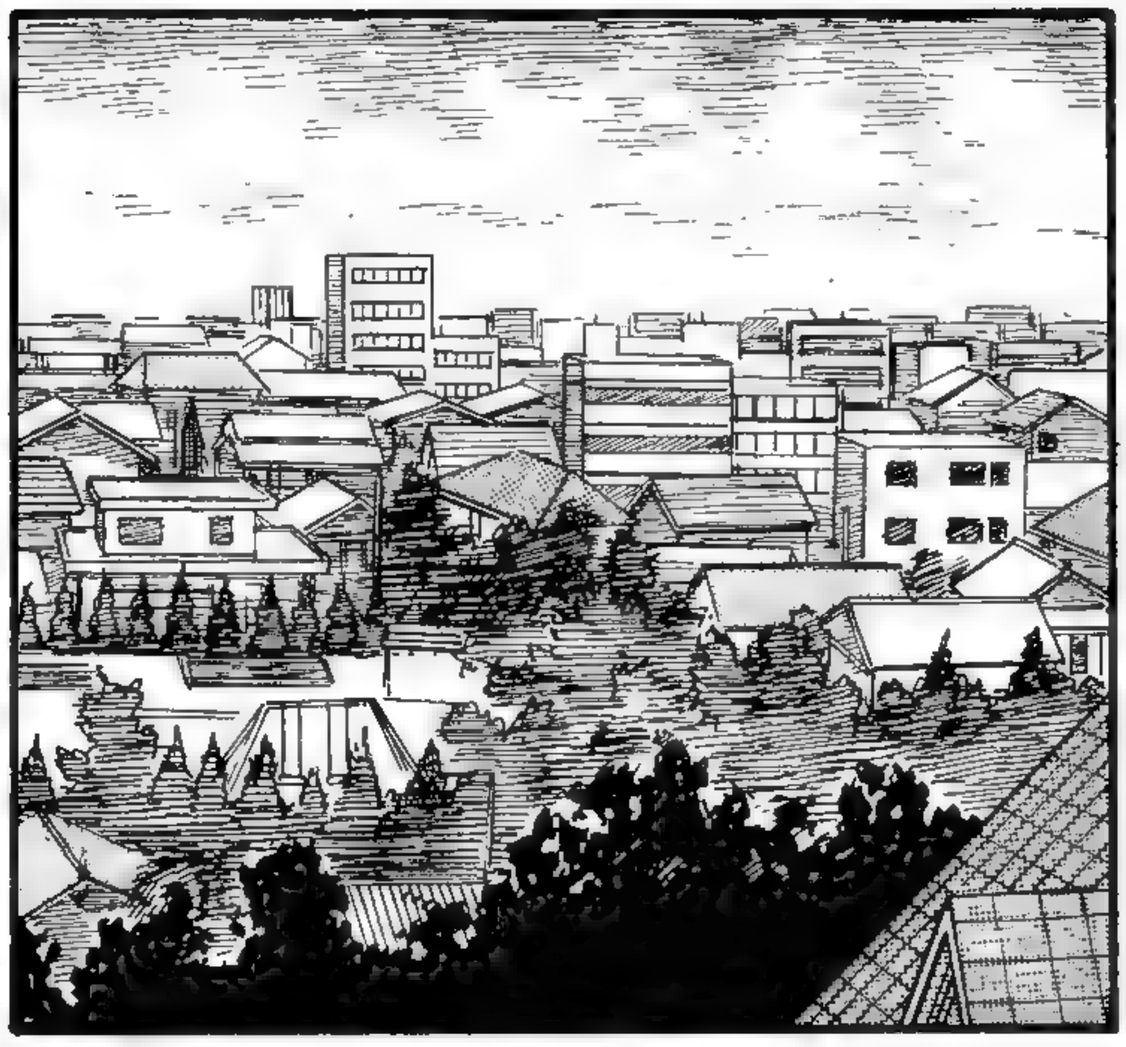
HAAH!

HAAH!

HNGH!

SPLOOSH

BRONZTON
CENTRAL PARK



HEE HEE HEE

GOOD-NESS!

AND TANAKA IN THE FOURTH DISTRICT GOT WHIPLASH IN A CAR ACCIDENT.

OOH, THAT'S ROUGH.

SO KAYAMA OVER IN THE THIRD DISTRICT? HER HUSBAND GOT FIRED.

CHATTER

CHATTER

CHATTER

CHATTER

WE RECENTLY MOVED INTO THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD.

MY NAME'S SHIRA-KAWA.

I JUST WANTED TO SAY HELLO.

HELLO!

YES?

CAN YOU SAY HELLO?

GO ON, SUSU-MU.

BOW

WHAT'S YOUR LITTLE BOY'S NAME?

OH! IS THAT SO?

WEL-COME, WEL-COME!

MOMMY, WHO ARE THOSE PEOPLE?

HOW ABOUT WE GO TO THE SANDBOX, THEN?

OUR KIDS ARE PLAYING IN THE SANDBOX. YOU CAN JOIN THEM.

OHH. THOSE.

THE BRONZE STATUES?

HM?

PFFT! YES. HIS WIFE.

AND THE ONE NEXT TO HIM IS HIS WIFE.

IT WAS PUT UP WHEN HE BUILT THIS PARK FIVE YEARS AGO.

THIS ONE'S THE FORMER MAYOR.

PFFFT!

... REALLY SO YOUNG AND BEAUTI-FUL?

MY! IS THE FORMER MAYOR'S WIFE...

WHAT? THEN WHY WOULD THEY...

BUT THAT'S NOT TOO LIKELY!

SHE SAYS IT'S HER WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG.

THE TRUTH IS, SHE'S NOT YOUNG OR PRETTY.

IT DOESN'T LOOK THE SLIGHT-EST BIT LIKE HER.

SHE'S ACTUALLY AN OLD HAG.

NO. MAYBE HE ELOPED WITH SOME YOUNG PRETTY THING?

YES, YES. THEY STILL HAVEN'T FOUND HIM?

THE OLD MAYOR DISAPPEARED THREE YEARS AGO, PROBABLY TO ESCAPE FROM HER.

HA HA HA HA HA!

EVERYONE IN TOWN SAYS SHE'S SHAMELESS.

SHE'S GOT QUITE THE NERVE, PUTTING UP THAT STATUE!

BUT THAT WOMAN HAS SPOOKILY SHARP EARS.

IT'S FINE. SHE WON'T HEAR US.

SEE? HER HOUSE IS RIGHT NEARBY. WE WOULDN'T WANT HER LISTENING IN.

NOW, LADIES! IF YOU SAY THAT TOO LOUDLY, SHE MIGHT HEAR YOU, YOU KNOW.

GOT TO WATCH WHAT YOU SAY.

SHE REALLY DOES! SHE KNOWS EVERY-THING.

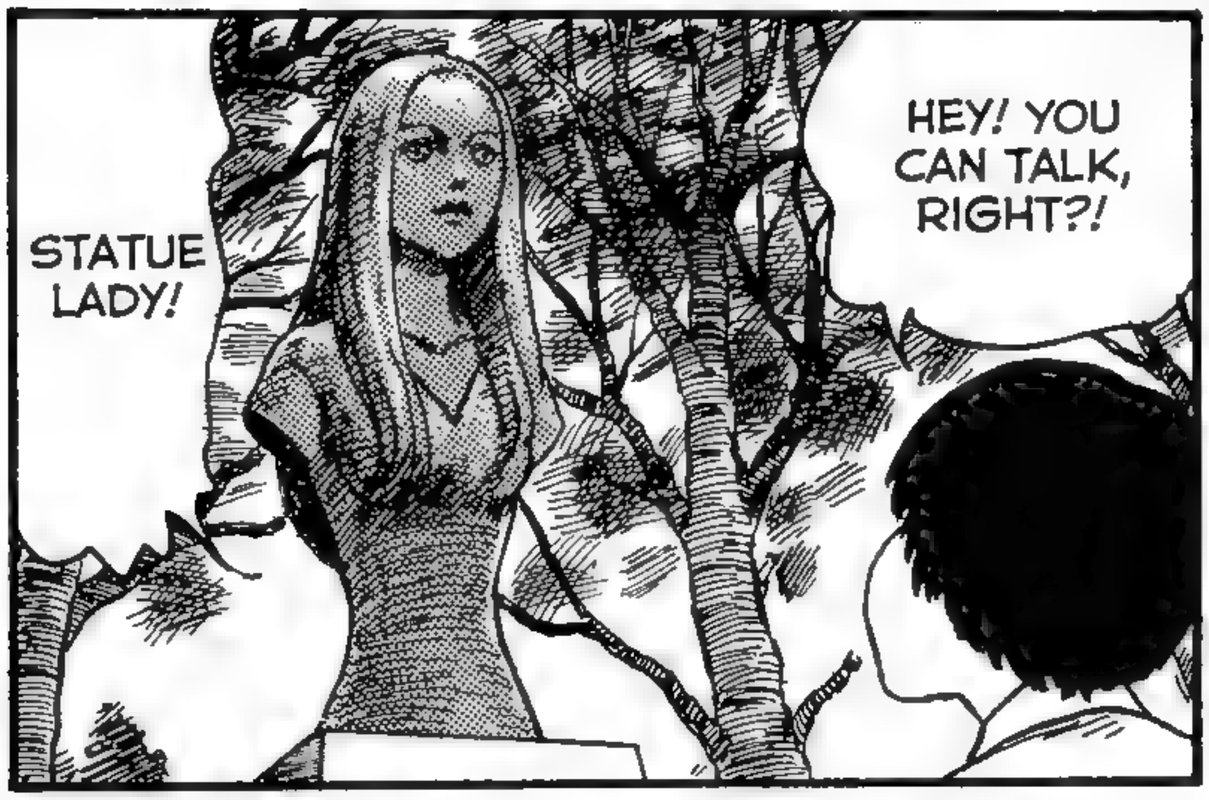
YOU STOP WITH THAT SILLINESS.

ARE YOU KIDS ON ABOUT THAT AGAIN?

YEAH, IT TOTALLY TALKS.

THAT STATUE TALKS, Y'KNOW.

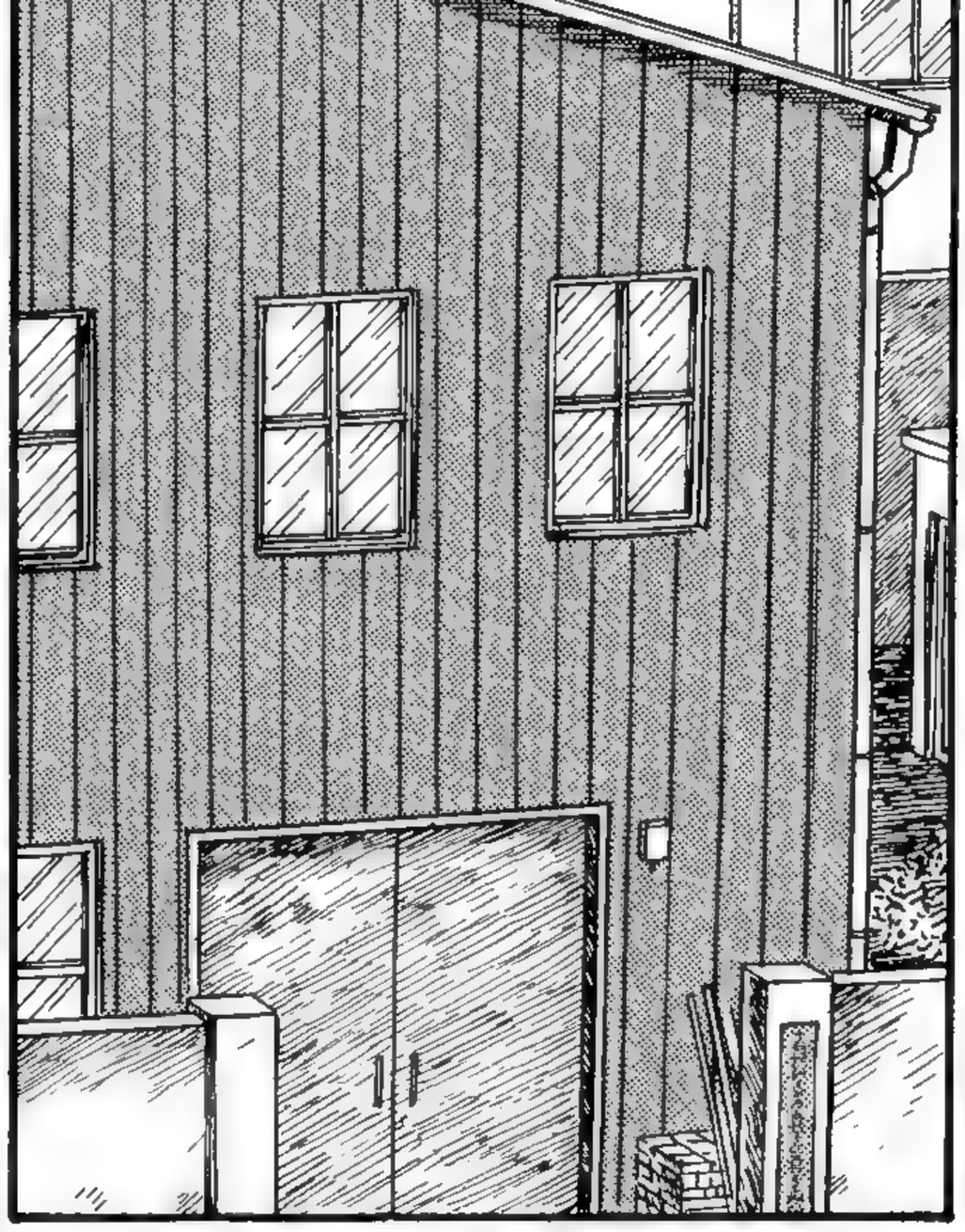
YEAH! THE MAN DOESN'T, THOUGH.
IT'S TRUE, MOM! THE WOMAN STATUE TALKS TO US SOMETIMES.

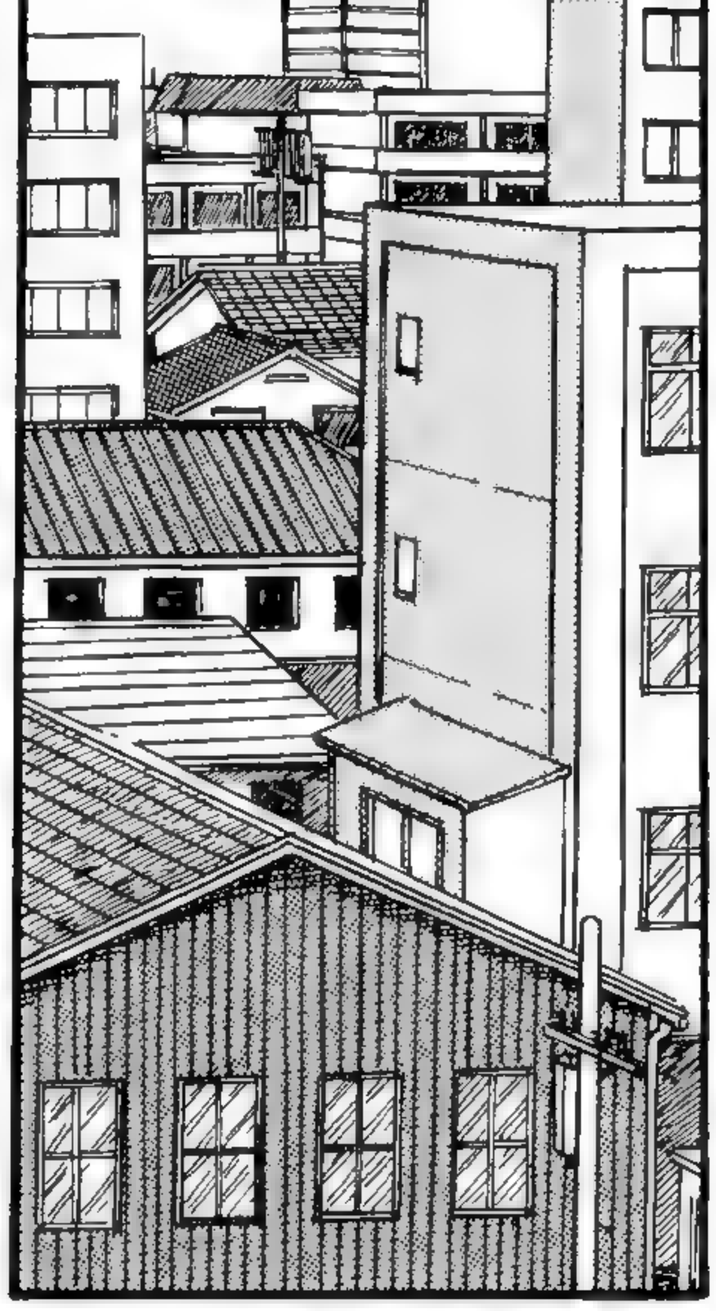

STATUE LADY!
HEY! YOU CAN TALK, RIGHT?!

IT'S TRUE!
ENOUGH OF THIS NON-SENSE!

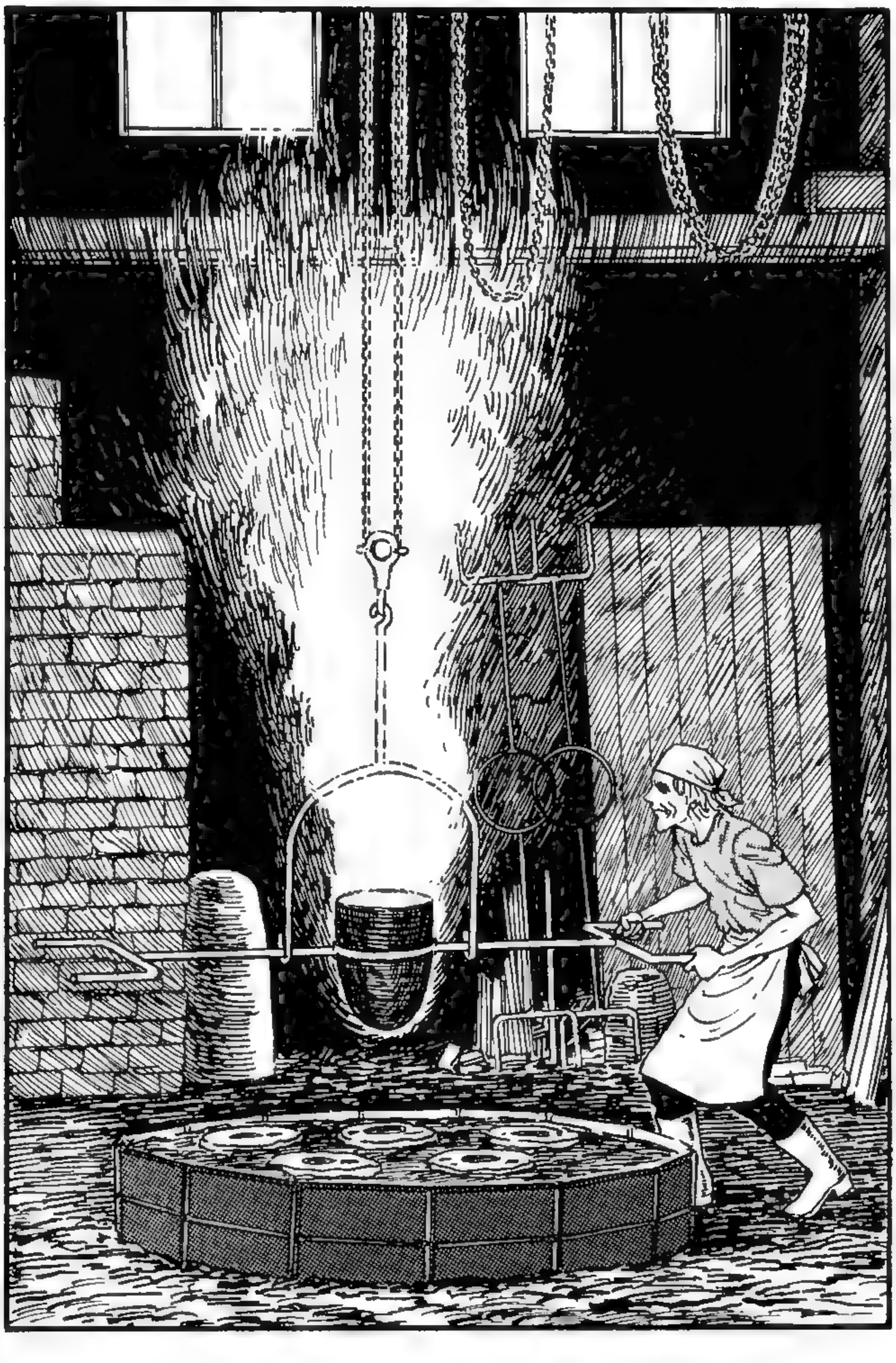
HUH? WEIRD.
STATUE LADY!
SEE? OF COURSE THE STATUE DOESN'T TALK! HO HO HO!

TSUCHIYA ART CASTING





THMMM



MASTER TSUCHIYA, HARD AT WORK AS USUAL, I SEE.

WELL, WELL. IF IT ISN'T MRS. SONOBE!

YOU HAVE EXCELLENT TIMING.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I'M QUITE PROUD OF THIS NEW PIECE.

KOFF! KOFF! IT IS INDEED.

RIGHT THIS WAY.

IS IT FINISHED, THEN?

THE STATUE IN THE PARK'S BEEN VERY WELL RECEIVED.

AND THIS NEW ONE'S EQUALLY LOVELY. I'LL DISPLAY IT AT THE HOUSE.

AND I'LL HAVE A PARTY FOR THE UNVEILING. YOU HAVE TO COME, TOO, MASTER TSUCHIYA.

WELL, OF COURSE.

IT'S WONDER-FUL!

THE SPITTING IMAGE OF ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

WHAT? YOU GOT AN INVITATION TOO, SHIRAKAWA?

YES. "THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED PATRONAGE OF THE PARK"...

UGH. HOW COULD SHE KNOW YOU, I WONDER?

BRONZTON CENTRAL PARK

IT'S NOT AS IF WE'RE CLOSE FRIENDS.

PLUS, IT SAYS IT'S A PARTY TO UNVEIL A NEW STATUE.

OOH, I DON'T LIKE IT.

SHE REALLY DOES KNOW EVERY-THING.

I DON'T LIKE THIS. WHAT IS SHE UP TO?

LOOK. IT SAYS THERE'LL BE A BUNCH OF YOUNG MEN, TOO, SO WE SHOULDN'T TELL OUR HUSBANDS.

SHE'S GOING TO FORCE ANOTHER ONE ON US THAT LOOKS NOTHING LIKE HER AND BRAG ABOUT IT.

WE CAN EAT AND THEN LEAVE STRAIGHT-AWAY.

YES, RIGHT!

HEY, SHOULD WE JUST GO AND SEE?

...

IT SOUNDS LIKE THERE'LL BE A REAL SPREAD, THOUGH.

I'M TRULY HONORED THAT YOU VISIT IT EVERY DAY.

THAT PARK HAS A DEEP SIGNIFICANCE FOR ME. MY HUSBAND DID CREATE IT, AFTER ALL.

SONOBE

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING TODAY.

HE'S CREATED YET ANOTHER MAGNIFICENT STATUE FOR ME.

THIS IS THE BRILLIANT SCULPTOR AND CASTER, MASTER TSUCHIYA!

I WANTED TO SHOW MY GRATITUDE, HENCE THIS LITTLE EVENT. PLEASE RELAX AND ENJOY YOURSELVES.

JUST WONDER-FUL!

CLAP

CLAP

OOH! MARVEL-OUS!

CLAP

TUG

NOW THEN, IT'S TIME AT LAST FOR THE UNVEILING.

FWP

I COULD, TOO!

IT REALLY IS A LOVELY STATUE. I COULD LOOK AT IT ALL DAY.

EVERY-THING'S DELI-CIOUS!

CHK

CHK

OH! YOU!

PLEASE, HAVE ANOTHER DRINK!

...I FIRST CREATE THE PROTO-TYPE IN WAX.

AS TO MY OWN PERSONAL PROCESS ...

MASTER TSUCHIYA, HOW DO YOU CREATE A BRONZE STATUE ANYWAY?

KOFF! KOFF!

ALTHOUGH IN PRACTICE, IT'S A BIT MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT.

EX-CUSE ME.

AFTER THE WAX IS OUT, I POUR BRONZE INTO THE CAVITY, AND IT'S FINISHED.

I THEN WRAP THAT IN PLASTER, AND ONCE IT'S HARDENED, I FIRE IT AND THE WAX INSIDE MELTS OUT.

GO INTO THE OTHER ROOM AND REST.

YOU DO LOOK TIRED, HM?

I DON'T HAVE MUCH LONGER, I'M AFRAID.

MY LUNGS ARE IN TERRIBLE SHAPE AFTER YEARS OF CASTING.

PTAN

...

KOFF! KOFF!

I'LL BE BACK SOON, LADIES. PLEASE ENJOY YOURSELVES.

AND WHERE ARE ALL THE YOUNG MEN SUPPOSEDLY ATTENDING? WHAT A FRAUD.

WELL, THIS IS A SURPRISE! WE'RE THE ONLY ONES SHE INVITED!

HOW CAN IT LOOK LIKE THAT WHEN SHE'S SO UGLY?!

YOU HAVE TO LAUGH, THOUGH! HA HA HA HA!

THE STATUE DOESN'T LOOK A THING LIKE HER.

HE REALLY DID DO IT UP, HM!

AND THE FOOD IS *AWFUL!*

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

HEE HEE HEE!

HA HA HA HA HA!

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

WHAT ?!

THE STATUE... IT'S TALKING!

HEH HEH HEH! FOOLS. THE ONE TALKING IS THE UGLY OLD HAG IN THE ROOM NEXT DOOR.

YOU'VE INSULTED ME PLENTY IN THE PARK AS WELL!

I HEARD EVERY-THING YOU SAID!

THE SAME AS THE ONE IN THE PARK. I HAVE A PERFECT GRASP OF WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE FROM HERE IN MY HOUSE!

THERE'S A HIGH-PRECISION LISTENING DEVICE AND CAMERA INSIDE THIS STATUE. IT'S ALSO GOT A BUILT-IN SPEAKER.

I CAN TALK TO YOU AND YOUR STUPID BRATS FROM THE STATUE!

AS FOR YOU ALL...

THE DRUGS SHOULD BE TAKING EFFECT.

I IMAGINE YOU'RE GETTING RATHER SLEEPY RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

...

NNNM!

KLAK

THIS IS MASTER TSUCHIYA'S WORKSHOP. WE BROUGHT YOU HERE WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP.

UNTIE US!

YOU LET US GO RIGHT NOW!

WHERE ARE WE?!

THIS IS JUST—!

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?!

YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS!

WHAT ?!

SO I'M NOT INCLINED TO LET YOU BACK OUT INTO THE WORLD.

HEH HEH HEH! I SUPPOSE NOT.

THE WAY YOU COVER YOUR WAX MODELS IN PLASTER AND MAKE YOUR CASTINGS.

LET'S BURY THEM IN PLASTER.

MASTER TSUCHIYA, I'VE JUST HAD THE MOST WONDERFUL IDEA.

YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND, MADAME. HA...HA... HA....

INDEED.

MURDER-ER!

-IIIIIIIIIIII-

HELP!

AAAAH!

PLASTER

HAAH.

HAH... HA...

WE'RE FINALLY FINISHED.

PHEW.

WWWAAA

...I SUPPOSE IT WOULD MAKE A CAVITY IN THE SHAPE OF THE PEOPLE INSIDE.

OHH. IF WE FIRED IT AT A HIGH TEM-PERA-TURE ...

HM?

...BAKED THIS IN THE KILN?

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE...

PLEASE BAKE IT.

...

KRRRRR

KRRRRR

KRRRRR

KOFF

KOFF

W-WELL...

HOW ABOUT WE POUR CONCRETE IN?

IS THERE SOMETHING CHEAPER YOU COULD USE INSTEAD?

ACTUALLY, BRONZE WOULD BE WASTED ON THEM.

MASTER TSUCHIYA. WHEN THE FIRING'S DONE, THE NEXT STEP IS POURING IN THE BRONZE, YES?

SONORE

WE'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOU A MOMENT.

WE'RE WITH THE POLICE.

YES? WHO IS IT?

BUT THEY WENT HOME AFTER LUNCH.

YES. I DID HAVE A PARTY HERE LAST WEEK. I INVITED ALL FOUR OF THEM.

...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY DID AFTER THAT.

HAAH!

HAAH!

HAAH!

HAAH!

BOX KITCHEN YAMADA

KIBAN TRAFFIC OFFICE

OPEN

© ONO SATOSHI

THEY OBVIOUSLY SUSPECT ME.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! SOME DETECTIVES CAME TO MY HOUSE JUST NOW!

MASTER !

MASTER TSUCHIYA !

TSUCHIYA ART CASTING

...

THE CONCRETE'S FINALLY HARDENED, SO I TOOK THE MOLD OFF.

MADAME, TAKE A LOOK.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THIS IS EVIDENCE AGAINST US!

HURRY! SMASH IT TO BITS!

F-FOOL!

OUR COLLAB-ORATIVE EFFORT.

THIS IS A TOTALLY NEW TYPE OF ART.

CLANG

CLANG

CLANG

MOOO-OOM!

MOOO-OOOM!

BRONZTON CENTRAL PARK

HEY, SUSU-MU!

OKAY!

LET'S ASK THE STATUES!

WHERE'D YOU GO?!

MOO-OOM!

OUR MOMS HAVEN'T COME HOME.

DID MY MOM GO SOME-WHERE?

STATUE LADY, DO YOU KNOW WHERE MOM IS?

REALLY ?!

THEY WENT ON A FUN TRIP.

BOYS. YOUR MOMS WILL BE BACK SOON.

REALLY.

WHO'S THERE ?!

WHO ...

THIS WOMAN IS LYING!

LIAR!

W-WHAT DID YOU SAY?!

AH ?!

IT'S COMING FROM THE RIGHT.

SOMEONE'S TALKING NEXT TO MY STATUE.

I CAN HEAR IT THROUGH MY HEAD-PHONES. SOMEONE IN THE PARK IS TALKING.

BOYS, THIS WOMAN IS A MURDERER.

SHE'S A SERIAL KILLER!

SHE MURDERED ME, TOO.

BOYS! THIS WOMAN MURDERED YOUR MOTHERS AND TURNED THEM INTO CONCRETE.

BUT THIS VOICE...

I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE.

I'M HER HUSBAND!

SHE KILLED ME THREE YEARS AGO AND BURIED ME IN THE SWAMP IN THE YARD!

BUT HOW?!

TH-THIS VOICE...

SO HIS STATUE'S SPEAKING, ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

IT'S HIM. HE'S TALKING...

IT DOESN'T HAVE THE EQUIPMENT FOR THAT.

IT'S STRANGE, THOUGH. I MEAN, HIS STATUE TALKING!

REPORT THIS WOMAN TO THE POLICE!

I ASKED MASTER TSUCHIYA TO SECRETLY EQUIP MY STATUE! AND ONLY MY STATUE!

I HAVE TO DO SOME-THING!

YOU SHUT UP!

HOW... WHERE WOULD A DEAD PERSON BE TALKING FROM?

KSH

KSH KSH

AND EVEN IF IT DID HAVE A MICRO-PHONE...

...PEACE-FULLY IN THE SWAMP.

HE SHOULD BE RESTING...

HAAH!

HAAH!

ANSWER ME!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SPOKE JUST NOW?!

YOU!

SPLISH

...THAT STATUE MIGHT KEEP TALKING.

IF I LEAVE HIM HERE...

AH!

I'M SURE I SANK HIM AROUND HERE.

IT WAS AROUND HERE.

HNG!

WAX ?!

MADAME, THIS...

YOUR HUS-BAND'S TURNED TO WAX.

IT'S KNOWN AS "CORPSE WAX."

YES. UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS, A CORPSE WILL CHANGE INTO A WAXY BODY.

THERE'S SOME-THING I'D LIKE TO TRY FIRST.

OF COURSE. BUT IF I'M GOING TO FIRE IT ANYWAY...

LET'S BRING IT TO MY STUDIO.

PLEASE DISPOSE OF THIS BODY RIGHT AWAY.

BURN IT UP IN YOUR KILN!

MASTER TSUCHIYA, I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT.

SKKT

SKKT

SKK

PERSON-
ALLY,
I WISH
YOU'D
TURN IT
TO ASH
RIGHT
NOW.

WHAT
DO YOU
PLAN
TO DO
WITH
IT?

THE
POLICE CAN
COME, BUT
THEY'LL
THINK IT'S
NOTHING
MORE THAN
A WAX
SCULP-
TURE.

YOUR
HUSBAND
WILL BE
REBORN
AS A
WORK
OF ART.

IT'S ALL
RIGHT.
IT WON'T
LOOK
ANYTHING
LIKE YOUR
HUSBAND.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, MADAME?

SKK

SKK

SKK

HAAH...

HE'S BEAUTI-FUL.

MAS-TER, IT'S ...

IT'S ALMOST LIKE...

...MY HUSBAND ?

THIS IS...

OF COURSE I CAN!

COULD YOU MAKE A BRONZE OF THIS?

COULD YOU...

WELL ...

AAAAH!

YOU REALLY ARE ENCHANT-ING!

DID YOU JUST TALK?

WHA—?!

DON'T TOUCH ME, HAG!

YOU'RE IN THE WAY. GET OUT!

HEY! OLD LADY! WE'D LIKE TO BE ALONE!

THIS IS *MY* FORM.

THIS IS *MY* STATUE!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? *THIS* IS ME!

WHA...

WHAT?!

I MEAN, YOU! YOU USED TO BE A FAT, UGLY OLD MAN!

W- WHAT...

I'M NOT THAT UGLY.

THAT'S RIGHT.

YOU'RE NOTHING LIKE THIS BEAUTIFUL CREATURE!

WHAT?! HOW RUDE! HAVE YOU EVER LOOKED AT YOUR OWN FACE?

...

I'M A STAT-UE.

I'LL NEVER GET OLD.

AN UGLY OLD HAG!

YOU'LL LOOK LIKE THIS WHEN YOU GET OLD!

AND YOU!

...

I'M ALSO YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL NOW.

HEH HEH HEH!

GOOD IDEA.

IGNORE THAT OLD WOMAN.

HEH HEH HEH!

HEH HEH HEH!

MASTER TSUCHIYA. HOW CAN I EXPRESS MY COMPLICATED FEELINGS IN THAT MOMENT?

YOU DO UNDER-STAND HOW I FELT, DON'T YOU?

TO THINK I WOULD BE TREATED SO POORLY BY THE STATUE OF THE **MAN** I ONCE PASSIONATELY BURNED FOR...!

AND THE OTHER, A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAN. IT'S YOU WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

THE TWO STATUES YOU MADE, ONE THE IMAGE OF A YOUNG ME.

BY THE TIME YOU GET THIS LETTER, I WILL BE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SWAMP.

AND SO, I MADE UP MY MIND.

WHEN SUBJECTED TO THE SAME CONDITIONS AS MY HUSBAND, I'M SURE I'LL BECOME CORPSE WAX.

BRBL

BRBL

I WILL BECOME CORPSE WAX.

SUICIDE? NOT AT ALL.

IF THERE'S NOT ENOUGH MONEY FOR GOLD, FEEL FREE TO SELL MY HOUSE.

PLEASE PROMISE ME THAT YOU WILL TURN ME INTO GOLD THREE YEARS FROM NOW.

MAKE ME INTO A SCULPTURE WITH YOUR MARVELOUS SKILL.

MASTER TSUCHIYA, I HAVE A REQUEST. PLEASE PULL ME OUT AFTER THREE YEARS.

PLEASE POUR GOLD INTO MY MOLD, MASTER TSUCHIYA.

I'M SURE I'LL BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IN THIS WORLD.

STILL... SHE DID RUSH THINGS HERE.

SHE MUST'VE BEEN SEEING THINGS, SOME KIND OF PERSECUTION COMPLEX.

KOFF KOFF

RIDICULOUS. BRONZE STATUES CAN'T TALK AND MOVE, NOW CAN THEY?

...

KOFF

KOFF

KSH

KSH

KSH

AND THEN ...

KOFF

KOFF

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

...THREE YEARS LATER...

SONIC

I CAN'T GO DYING UNTIL I FINISH...

...HER GOLD STATUE.

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

THIS IS IT.

SWEEP

SWEEP

OH!

COME ON NOW...

WHERE ARE YOU...

SOOTHOOTH

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

TSUCHIYA ARTCAS

JUST AS YOU WISHED.

NOW I'M STARTING TO HEAR THINGS.

WHOOPS! NOT GOOD THERE.

WHEEZE

WHEEZE

AND THEN I'LL POUR GOLD INTO YOU, JUST AS YOU ASKED.

I'LL SCULPT YOU INTO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD.

MY DREAM'S FINALLY COMING TRUE, MASTER TSUCHIYA.

I'M SO HAPPY.

IT'S DONE. IT'S FINALLY DONE.

WHEEZE WHEEZE

HURRY. TURN MY BODY INTO GOLD!

I'M SO HAP-PY.

I'VE GOT TO GET YOU INTO A MOLD FIRST.

KLAK KLAK

CAN'T RUSH THINGS.

WHEEZE WHEEZE

KRRRR

JUST WAITING FOR THE FIRING TO BE FINISHED INSIDE THE KILN.

UNTIL AT LAST, A BEAUTIFUL CAVITY IS MADE INSIDE THE MOLD. AND THEN...

AAH, SUCH JOY.

I'M INSIDE THE MOLD.

KOFF KOFF KOFF

KRRRR

...I'LL BE THE PEAK OF BEAUTY, BEWITCHING THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

...ONCE THE GOLD IS POURED IN...

CRACK

I-I CAN'T BREATHE !

RRK

MASTER TSUCHI-YA?

RRRRRR

WHAT'S GOING ON, MASTER?

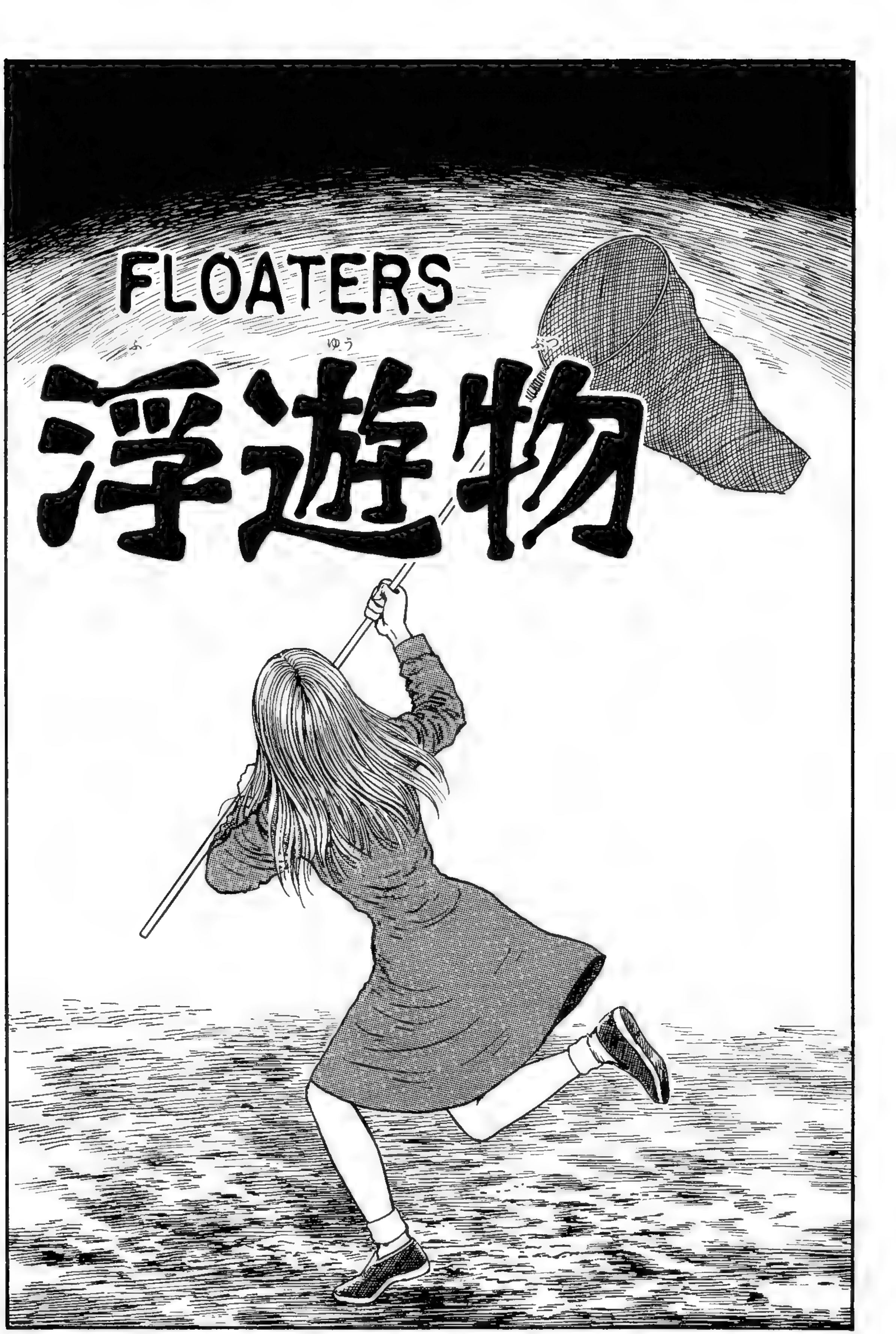
...ENDED UP EXISTING ONLY AS A CAVITY IN A MASS OF HARD PLASTER.

AND THUS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD...

BRONZE STATUE/END

FLOATERS

浮遊物（ふゆうぶつ）



HM?

ONE NIGHT, WHEN I WAS WALKING HOME LATE AFTER PRACTICE...

WHAT'S HE DOING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?

IS THAT MASAO?

HE HASN'T BEEN AT SCHOOL IN A WHILE, EITHER.

HEEEEEY! MASAO!

AH!

?!

GO AWAY!

CATCHING MOTHS?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WEIRDO.

W-WHAT...

PLEASE... RYOICHI! JUST GO!

GET OUT OF HERE! SERIOUSLY!

WHAT WAS HE SO MAD ABOUT?

WOW. MASAO SAID THAT?

I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THAT.

...RIGHT AROUND HERE.

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? IT WAS LAST NIGHT...

HUH.

IT WAS DARK, SO I COULDN'T REALLY TELL. BUT IT LOOKED LIKE SOME BLACK THINGS WERE FLYING AROUND.

WHAT WAS HE TRYING TO CATCH WITH THAT NET IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?

...

HMM. I GUESS SO.

BUT AFTER LAST NIGHT, I FEEL WEIRD ABOUT GOING.

I WAS THINKING ABOUT HEADING TO HIS HOUSE. HE HASN'T BEEN AT SCHOOL, SO...

KYOKO. HOW ABOUT I TELL YOU WHAT I THINK?

TH- THAT'S NOT TRUE!

HUH?

HEY, KYOKO. WHAT'S UP? YOU'VE BEEN SOMEWHERE ELSE THIS WHOLE TIME.

THAT'S WHAT IT'S FELT LIKE LATELY.

YOU'VE GOT THOSE SPECIAL FUNNY FEELINGS FOR MASAO, DON'T YOU?

LATELY, YOU'VE BEEN GETTING WEIRD WHENEVER MASAO COMES UP.

HA HA HA! SORRY. I'M JUST BEING HONEST HERE.

QUIT FOOLING AROUND!

DON'T GO CHEATING ON ME.

WHAT'S THAT?

WHOA ?

FREEZE

SOMETHING'S CAUGHT ON THE BRANCH THERE.

IT'S KINDA CREEPY.

SOME KIND OF SEED, MAYBE?

WHAT IS IT?

YEAH, WHAT THE HECK IS THIS?

FWEE

AH!

FWEE

FWEE

FWEE

HEY, KYOKO?

I LOVE YOU, KYOKO.

I LOVE YOU, KYOKO.

LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU.

Y-YEAH.

LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU.

THAT'S... MASAO'S VOICE, ISN'T IT?

LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU.

SHF

I LOVE YOU-

WHAT THE...?

...

FWEE

FWEE

FWEE

POKE

POKE

POKE

...

I LOVE YOU, KYOKO.

LOVE YOU.
LOVE YOU.
LOVE YOU.

IF YOU STIMULATE IT, IT TALKS.

I LOVE YOU.

BUT WHY IS THIS WEIRD HAIR BALL SPEAKING IN MASAO'S VOICE?

I GET IT. THIS THING'S MAKING SOUND BY RUBBING THOSE HAIRS TOGETHER!

I THOUGHT MASAO WAS HERE?

HE'S NOT.

HUH?

RYOICHI— HM?

KALK

DON'T WE HAVE A NET OR SOME-THING?!

C'MON, MOM! CATCH IT!

FWOOM

THIS THING'S TALKING— AH!

WHAT ?

WHAT'S THAT, DAD?

AN URBAN LEGEND THAT WAS POPULAR FOR A WHILE.

IT EATS FACE POWDER AND FLOUR TO MULTIPLY.

ISN'T IT A *KESARAN-PASARAN?*

TAP

MAYBE IT ATE SOME INK BY ACCIDENT.

FWSH

NO, NO. THOSE ARE WHITE. THIS ONE'S GOT A BLACK SHEEN. IT'S CREEPY.

HOW LONG WILL IT KEEP TALKING, DO YOU THINK?

ANYWAY, I'M GOING TO SEE MASAO TOMORROW.

I LOVE YOU, KYOKO.

LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU. LOVE YOU.

SHAKE SHAKE

O-
OH...

SO WHAT EXACTLY IS IT?

AND THAT'S HOW I FOUND IT.

IT SAID, "I LOVE YOU, KYOKO."

OH, THAT.

WHAT DID THIS HAIR BALL...

...SAY TO YOU AND KYOKO?

SO THEN ...

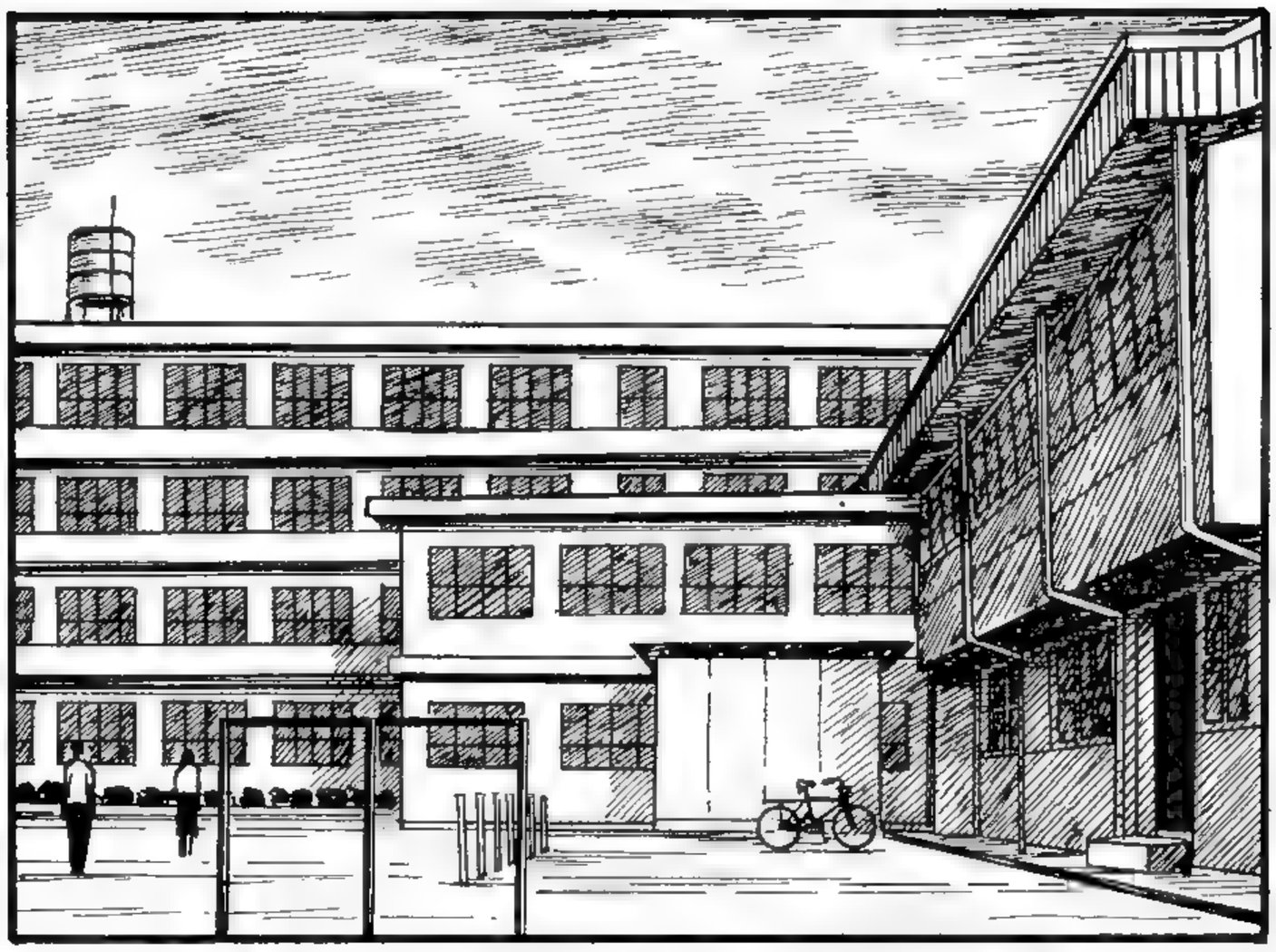
SLAM

AH! MASA—

ALL *THESE* THINGS DO IS LIE.

YEAH? DON'T WORRY, RYOICHI.

GRAB



I WANNA SHOW YOU SOMETHING COOL.
C'MERE A SEC.
WHAT'S UP, KAZUYA?

HEY, RYO-ICHI!

THIS!

THIS "COOL" THING?
WHAT IS IT?

SO? PRETTY WEIRD, *HUH?*

I CAUGHT IT. IT WAS FLOATING AROUND OUR BACKYARD YESTERDAY.

AH! THAT'S... WHERE'D YOU GET THAT?!

AND WHAT IT SAYS IS WILD!

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? AND WHOSE VOICE DO YOU THINK IT HAS? THIS'LL SHOCK YOU. MASAO'S!

PLUS, IT TALKS!

DON'T GET SO FULL OF YOURSELF! SO ANNOYING!

DAMMIT! KAWAMURA! THAT STUPID JERK!

I'LL KILL YOU SOON ENOUGH, YOU BASTARD!

HERE! LISTEN!

FWSH

FWEEE

MASAO IGNORES HIM, SO I FIGURED HE DIDN'T KNOW KAWAMURA EVEN EXISTED.

KAWA-MURA'S THE ONE ALWAYS FOLLOW-ING MASAO AROUND.

SO? PRETTY COOL, HUH? HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S MR. PERFECT, MASAO, RIGHT?

THIS WEIRD HAIR BALL'S SAYING HOW MASAO ACTUALLY FEELS.

BUT I GUESS HE REALLY HATES HIM.

IT JUST REPEATS THAT.

DAMMIT! KAWAMURA! THAT STUPID JERK! I'LL KILL YOU SOON ENOUGH, YOU BASTARD! DON'T GET SO FULL OF YOURSELF! SO ANNOYING!

IT SAID SOMETHING ELSE, THOUGH, SO IT WAS DIFFERENT FROM THIS ONE.

I KNOW. I HAD ONE, TOO.

WHAT?! YOU HAD ONE, TOO?

SO? I DUNNO WHY IT TALKS, BUT IT'S COOL, RIGHT?

FORGET IT! LIKE I'D GIVE BACK SOME-THING THIS COOL!

YOU SHOULD GIVE THAT ONE BACK, TOO. IT'S CREEPY.

COME ON! GIVE IT BACK!

YOU GAVE IT BACK?! YOU IDIOT!

YEAH, BUT I GAVE IT BACK TO MASAO.

IF YOU WERE GONNA GIVE IT AWAY, YOU SHOULDA LET ME HAVE IT!

TCH! HE'D NEVER KNOW, THOUGH. YOU'RE TOO HONEST.

OR MAYBE HE'S LOCKED UP IN HIS ROOM. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AROUND BACK.

MAYBE HE'S OUT.

THUD

THUD

SHUT UP! HE'S A FRIEND.

SNEAKING AROUND BACK? YOU'RE KINDA CREEPY, HUH?

FWOOSH

THUD

WHAT... IS THAT SOUND?

YOU IN THERE ?!

HEY! MASAO!

THUD

THUD

KLATTER

AAA-
AAAH!

IT'S HOPE-LESS. THERE'S NO WAY WE'LL GET THEM ALL BACK!

MASAO !

Y-YOU JERK! WHO OPENED THE WINDOW?!

HURRY! WE HAVE TO CATCH THEM!

I'LL SHOW YOU MY SKILLS FROM YEARS OF BUTTERFLY CATCHING!

OKAY, MASAO! LEAVE IT TO ME!

ARE THEY YOUR PETS?

MASAO, WHAT *ARE* THOSE THINGS?! ARE THEY ALIVE?

AAAH! THEY'RE REALLY ON THE OUTSIDE NOW!

IMPOS-SIBLE. HE'LL NEVER CATCH THEM.

AAH. I'M RUINED.

POP-PING OUT?!

THEY JUST START-ING POPPING OUT!

NO! THAT'S NOT IT!

IT DOESN'T MATTER EITHER WAY, BUT I WANTED TO AT LEAST KISS KYOKO ONCE.

FWEE

RYOICHI FOUND OUT ABOUT KYOKO. DAMMIT ALL TO HELL!

IF ONLY RYOICHI DIDN'T EXIST, THEN KYOKO WOULD BE MINE.

FWEE FWEE

NO. I WON'T ACCEPT THAT.

THAT'S NOT HOW I FEEL. NO WAY.

FWEE

MASAO... ARE THEY SAYING HOW YOU REALLY FEEL ABOUT STUFF?

I... I WOULD NEVER THINK SUCH UGLY THINGS!

I'M INNOCENT!

FWSH

FWSH

HEY, RYOICHI! CHECK OUT MY SKILLS!

K-KAZUYA... YOU...

I CAUGHT A LOT OF THEM.

THE NEXT DAY, KAZUYA CAME TO SCHOOL WITH A WHOLE BUNCH OF THE HAIR BALLS.

TUT-TUT! NOT A WORD! THEY WERE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE PLACE...

...AND I WAS THE ONE TO COLLECT THEM!

KAZUYA!

CUZ I WANTED TO SHOW EVERYONE.

WHY DID YOU BRING THEM TO SCHOOL?

WHY ARE THEY SPEAKING IN MASAO'S VOICE?

WHAT THE HECK ARE THOSE?

THIS IS JUST MY GUESS, BUT MASAO COULDN'T COMPLETELY PUSH DOWN ALL THE DARKNESS INSIDE OF HIM, SO IT TOOK SHAPE IN THE WORLD.

WOW. *THAT'S* WHAT MASAO WAS ACTUALLY THINKING?

NOT A CHANCE!! THIS IS MY PRECIOUS COLLECTION!

LOOKS FUN.

HEY, KAZUYA! HOW ABOUT GIVING ME ONE? JUST ONE!

EACH HAIR BALL IS ONE THOUGHT.

MEANING MASAO'S REAL FEELINGS ARE IN EACH OF THESE HAIR BALLS.

THAT KAZUYA'S THE WORST.

HE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO COME BACK TO SCHOOL LIKE THIS.

I WONDER HOW MASAO'S HOLDING UP.

WHAT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO DIE?

I'M RUINED. IT'S ALL OVER.

AAH. I WANT TO DIE.

I SPAT, AND THERE WERE ALL THESE TINY GRAINS IN MY SALIVA.

PTT

MY MOUTH HAD BEEN FEELING KIND OF ROUGH.

RUINED.

RUINED.

THEY STARTED SHOWING UP TWO WEEKS AGO.

BEFORE I KNEW IT, THEY'D SPREAD ALL OVER MY BED-ROOM.

THEY CAME FROM INSIDE OF ME.

BUT WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT NOW, THOSE GRAINS HAD TO BE THE CAUSE OF THIS.

I THOUGHT MAYBE I'D GOTTEN SOME SAND IN MY MOUTH.

AAH. I WANT TO DIE.

WHY AM I THE ONLY PERSON WHO THIS IS HAPPENING TO?

I'M RUINED.

AND THEN THEY GREW THESE CREEPY BLACK HAIRS AND BEGAN TO FLOAT UP INTO THE AIR.

AND SPEAK IN MY VOICE.

JUST SHUT UP!

KLAK

IF YOU WANT OUTSIDE SO BADLY, THEN GO!

KACHAK

I DON'T EVEN CARE ANYMORE. YOU DIS-GUSTING HAIR BALLS!

WHAT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO DIE?

DAM-MIT!

I'M RUINED. IT'S OVER.

KYOKO ...

WHAT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO DIE?

...!

PLEASE DON'T THINK ABOUT DYING.

HOW ARE YOU? I CAME BECAUSE I'M WORRIED.

SO...WAS THAT THING ABOUT ME A LIE, TOO?

...!

IT'S ALL LIES.

KYOKO, DON'T BELIEVE WHAT THOSE HAIR BALLS SAY.

THAT'S A LIE, TOO. SORRY TO MAKE TROUBLE FOR YOU.

YEAH.

...

OH...

MASAO ...

SOB SOB... SOB!

MASAO KILLED HIMSELF THAT NIGHT.

I'M CHEATING ON MY BOYFRIEND!

HIS NAME IS KIMURA!

SOON HAIR BALLS FROM OTHER PEOPLE IN TOWN BEGAN TO DRIFT THROUGH THE SKY.

OTHER PEOPLE WERE GENER-ATING THEM, TOO.

MOM! I'M SCARED!

GIVE ME BOOBS!

I DID A HIT-AND-RUN LAST NIGHT. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

AH! THAT ONE WAS MINE!

WHAP

YESSSSS! GOTCHA!

MY HEMOR-RHOIDS HURT.

YAH YAH YAH

AH!

KEY

NO! IT'S MINE!

WHAT?! I'M THE ONE WHO CAUGHT IT!

GIVE IT! IT'S MINE!

SHUT UP!

HEY! GIVE THAT BACK!

SAD

I'M THE PIONEER IN HAIR BALL HUNTING!

DON'T GO CATCHING HAIR BALLS AROUND HERE!

WONDER WHAT PERSONAL SECRET THIS ONE'S HIDING!

HEH HEH HEH!

WAA-AAAH!

OH! ANOTHER ONE!

HM? WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS HERE?

CLAMOR

CLAMOR

CLAMOR

FWEE

FWEE

I WANT TO REPLACE HIM!

UGH! I HATE MY MANAGER!

MIYO JINNO'S HAIR BALL?!

WHAT?!

SHE'S FA-MOUS!

THAT VOICE! IT HAS TO BE!

IT'S MIYO JINNO!

GET IT!

IT'S NO USE. I CAN'T REACH!

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE COLLECTING THEM ALSO GREW, CAUSING ALL KINDS OF TROUBLE, EVEN MURDER.

THE NUMBER OF HAIR BALLS DRIFTING THROUGH THE AIR GREW WITH EACH PASSING DAY.

MOM!

IT'S OKAY. HE CAN COME UP.

SORRY. KYOKO'S... A LITTLE—

GOOD-NESS! RYOICHI!

IS KYOKO HOME?

HELLO!

KREE

KYO-KO?

THUMP

THUMP

IT'S FINALLY HAPPENING TO ME.

RYOICHI...

I MEAN, RYOICHI'S EASY TO GET ALONG WITH.

BUT I WAS ATTRACTED TO MASAO'S MYSTERIOUS AIR.

I LIKED MASAO.

I...

I'M SORRY, RYOICHI.

...

YOU CAN BURN THESE RIGHT UP WITH A LIGHTER.

OKAY.

HE'S BECOME OBSESSED WITH THEM. I HEAR HE'S DOING SOME PRETTY NASTY STUFF.

YOU WOULDN'T WANT THEM GETTING OUTSIDE WHERE KAZUYA COULD CATCH THEM.

KYOKO. YOU SHOULD GET RID OF THESE HAIR BALLS QUICK.

HEH HEH!

HEH HEH HEH!

MAGNIFI-CENT.

HEH HEH HEH!

AND THEY SAY THERE ARE EVEN MORE AMAZING ONES OUT THERE. DODGY MONOLOGUES FROM BIGWIG POLITICIANS AND FAMOUS ACTRESSES!

THIS IS MY BEST TREA-SURE!

UGH! I HATE MY MANAGER!

I WANT TO REPLACE HIM!

EWEEEWEE

ESPE-CIALLY THIS ONE!

I'LL JUST TAKE A BATH AND GO TO BED.

FWEE

GOTTA GET RID OF THE BORING ONES.

POKE POKE POKE

I WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP THEM ALL IN HERE, THOUGH.

I'D LIKE TO GET MY HANDS ON ONE OF THOSE.

EEEE

FWSH

FWSH

FWSH

AH! NOW I'VE DONE IT!

I CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THAT DEATH CRY!

HA HA HA!

TOO MUCH FOR ME.

SLAM

IF YOU SET THEM OFF ACCIDEN-TALLY, THEY ALL START TALKING.

I'M SORRY, MOM!

IDIOT! WATCH THE ROAD!

MY HEMOR-RHOIDS HURT.

WHEN IS THAT MAN COMING HOME?

THIS IS ACTUALLY THE BEST!

MY ATH-LETE'S FOOT IS ITCHING.

OH NO! I'M LATE!

HEH HEH HEH. HA HA HA HA!

...

GAH!

THERE ARE SO MANY TODAY, HM?

A NEW RECORD. YOU THINK THERE'LL BE MORE STILL?

THEY'RE SO DARNED NOISY.

HOW'S THE SITUATION AT YOUR HOUSE?

FORTUNATELY, I HAVEN'T PRODUCED ANY MYSELF.

THAT'S GREAT NEWS. I HEAR IT'S A BIOLOGICAL PREDISPOSITION. SOME PEOPLE CAN, SOME CAN'T.

I GUESS THE CITIES ARE MOVING TO CLEAN THEM UP.

I COULDN'T SLEEP LAST NIGHT.

WHAT IS THE COUNTRY DOING ABOUT THIS?!

WHAT HAP-PENED TO THE HAIR BALLS IN MY ROOM?!

WHAT IS IT, KAZUYA?

HEY! MA!

MA!

WHAT ?!

WHA ...

SO DARNED LOUD.

I THREW THEM OUT!

YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THIS. GET OVER THIS WEIRD OBSES-SION!

WHY WOULD YOU...

Y-YOU THREW THEM ALL OUT?!

YOUR FATHER'S CRYING UP IN HEAVEN!

YES, I DID.

UNNNH!

THUD

WHAM

SHUT UP!

WHAM

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING? THIS BOY...

OW!

EEE!

HAAH!

HAAH!

MY PRECIOUS COLLECTION...

HAAH!

HAAH!

HAAH!
HAAH!

FLUTTER

OH!

AH!

FLUTTER FLUTTER FLUTTER

WHAT ?!

WHA—!

YOU CAN PEEK AT EVERYBODY'S SECRETS.

HEH HEH HEH! THE HAIR BALLS ARE AMAZING.

HEH HEH HEH!

YOU CAN PEEK AT EVERY-BODY'S SECRETS.

HEH HEH HEH! THE HAIR BALLS ARE AMAZING.

HEH HEH HEH!

THAT'S... THAT'S MY VOICE.

FLUTTER

AH! CRAP!

THE WINDOW'S OPEN!

A- ACTUALLY, THE INSIDE OF MY MOUTH LATELY'S BEEN...

WHEN... BUT I THOUGHT I COULDN'T MAKE HAIR BALLS...

DAMMIT!

STOP!

THDTHD

LIKE I'M LETTING IT GET AWAY!

WHERE IS IT?

WHERE'D IT GO?!

WHICH IS IT?!

SHIT!

I'M SO TIRED.

FLOP

DAMMIT. IT GOT AWAY!

I'LL GO LOOK FOR IT AGAIN TOMOR-ROW!

CHI-RP

CHI-RP

AH!

FLUTTER

I DIDN'T CLOSE IT!

AH! CRAP! THE WINDOW!

I KILLED MY MA.

I GOT MIYO JINNO'S HAIR BALL BY KILLING SOMEONE!

DAMMIT! MORE!

THE MAJORITY OF THEM FELL TO THE GROUND...

AFTER THAT, NUMBER OF HAIR BALLS DRIFTING THROUGH THE AIR DROPPED DRAMATICALLY.

...AND INSTANTLY TURNED TO DIRT.

YEAH ...

THE HAIR BALLS ARE MOSTLY GONE. YOU GOTTA CHEER UP, TOO.

HEY, KYOKO. THINGS HAVE SETTLED DOWN, HUH?

HEH HEH. HEH HEH!

BUT SHE'S SLEEPING PEACEFULLY IN THE GARDEN.

I DID WRONG BY MA...

I WAS WORRIED THERE FOR A MINUTE.

HONESTLY, PHEW.

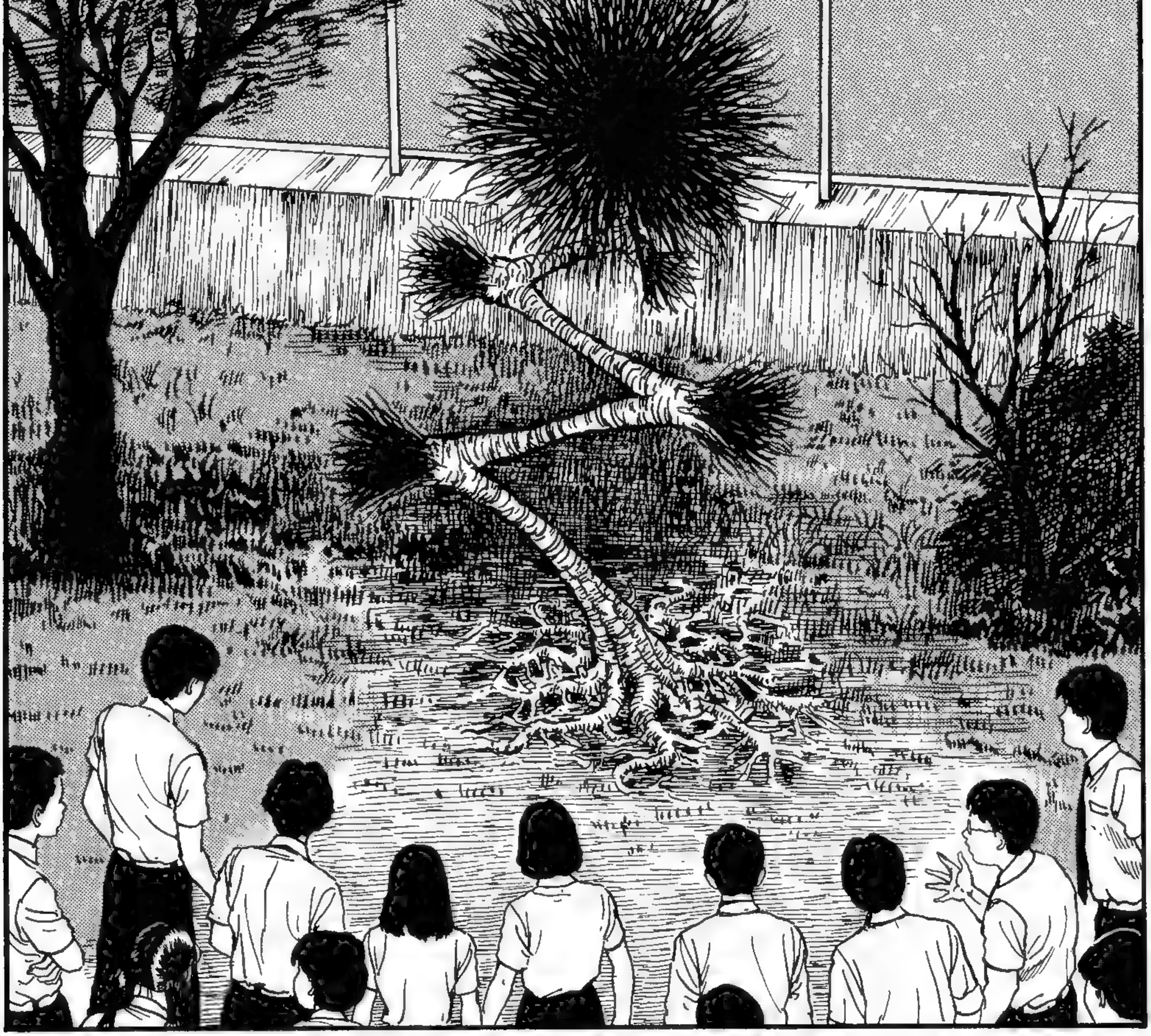
CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER

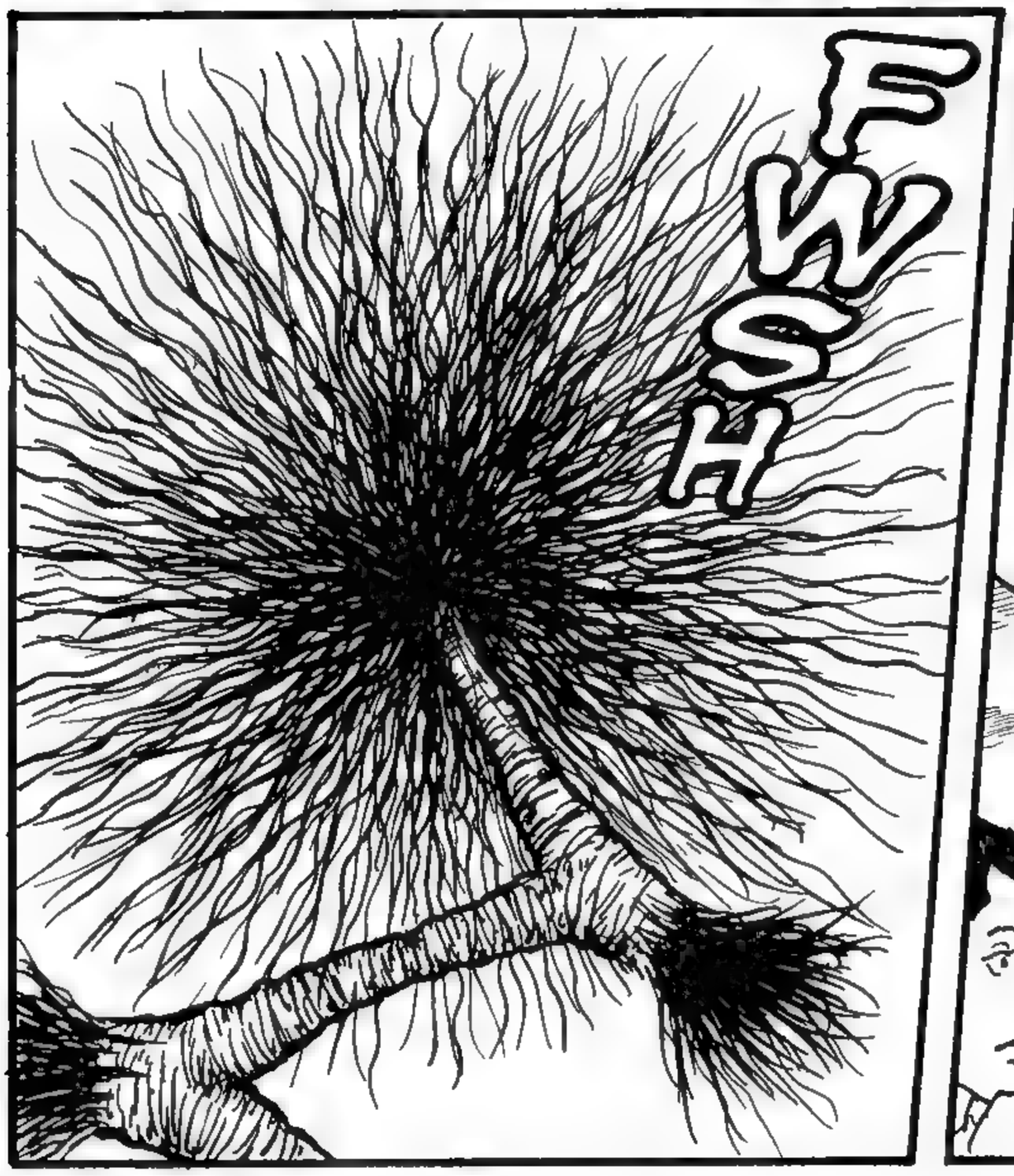
HUH? WHAT'S ALL THAT YELLING?

CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER CHATTER

IN THE CORNER OF THE GROUNDS. IS THAT THING ALIVE?

HEY! WHAT'S THAT?




WHOOSH

WHAT THE...
IT LOOKS LIKE AN ENORMOUS HAIR BALL.

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THIS... PLANT?
IT WASN'T HERE BEFORE.

MY MA!

I KILLED

FWEE

FWEE

...IN WHAT WAS DEFINITELY KAZUYA'S VOICE.

IT ROARED LOUDLY...

ENORMOUS HAIR BALL TREES POPPED UP ALL OVER THE COUNTRY...

...SHRIEK-ING LOUDLY.

BUT THE PLANTS WERE SOON CHOPPED DOWN.

THEY WERE ALL GONE BEFORE TOO LONG.

ON THE HILL BEHIND THE SCHOOL.

THERE'S SOME-THING I WANNA SHOW YOU.

OKAY, BUT WHERE, RYOICHI?

HEY, KYOKO? COME WITH ME FOR A BIT?

THERE.

...

I FOUND IT YESTERDAY.

WHY ARE YOU SHOWING ME THIS?

SORRY.

S—

FWEE

FWEE

FWSH

...I DID LOVE YOU.

SORRY I LIED TO YOU, KYOKO. IN TRUTH...

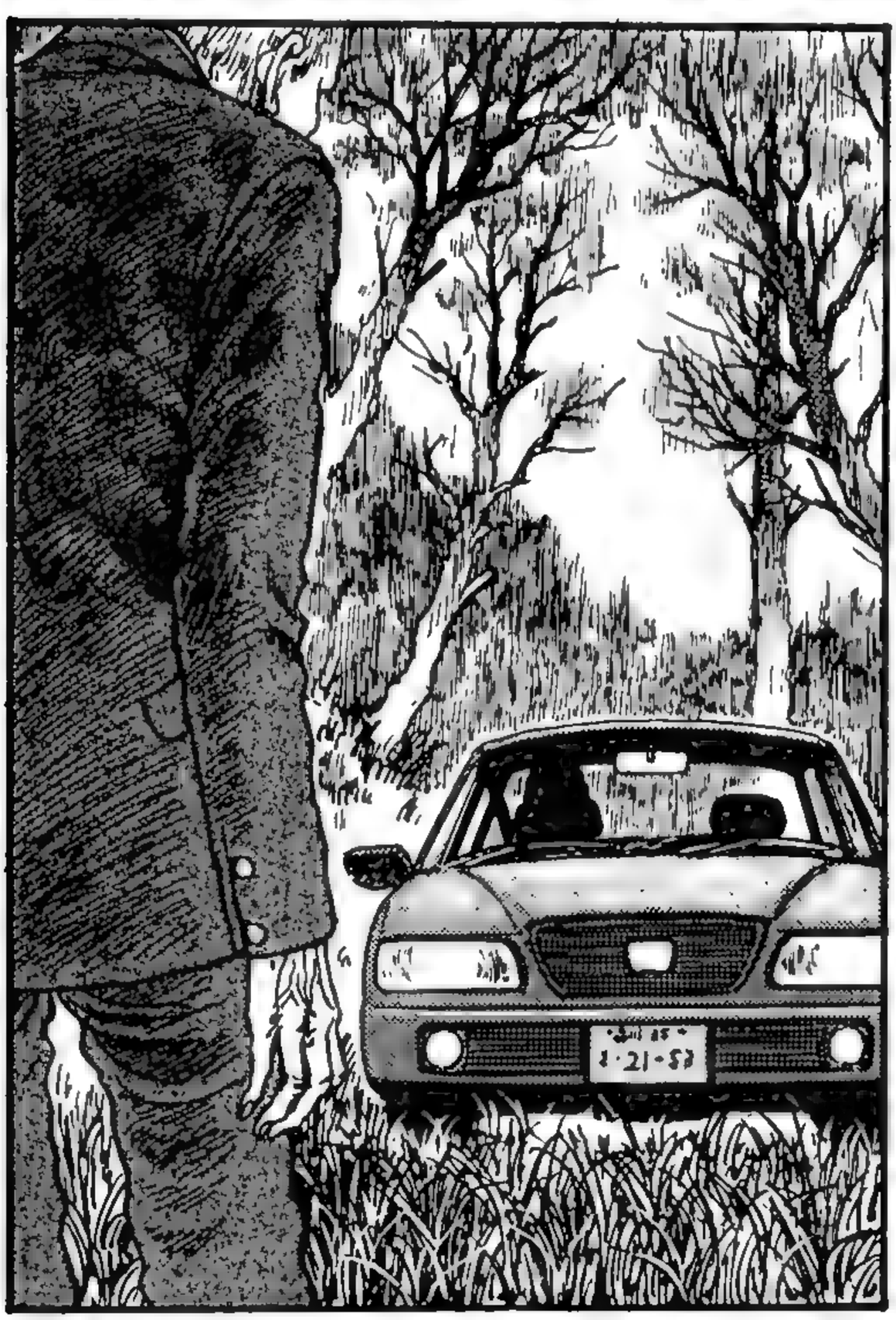
I DID LOVE YOU.

FLOATERS/END

THE BLOODY STORY OF SHIROSUNA

白砂村血譚

THE MAYOR SAID HE'D BE WAITING AT THE PASS.



I'M THE MAYOR OF SHI-ROSUNA.

THANK YOU FOR COMING.

HELLO! I'M DOCTOR FURUHATA.

IT MUST BE INCONVENIENT FOR YOU, COMING ALL THE WAY FROM THE CITY.

THERE'S NO ROAD IN.

THE VILLAGE IS THIS WAY.

THE MAYOR DID NOT LOOK WELL AT ALL.

...DO NOT WISH FOR DEVELOP-MENT.

THE VILLAG-ERS...

I'M SURE IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR DEVELOP-MENT AROUND HERE.

ARE THERE PLANS TO BUILD A ROAD?

THE BUILDINGS SEEMED TRANSPLANTED FROM ANOTHER ERA.

DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT WAS LATE AUTUMN, THE AIR WAS WARM AND HUMID.

AS WE APPROACHED THE VILLAGE, THINGS FELT STRANGE, WORRYING ME.

AND ...

THE GRASS GREW WILD.

POWER LINES WERE STRUNG ARTLESSLY ON MAIMED TREES.

...AND SICKLY.

...THE VILLAGERS' FACES WERE ALL PALE...

THE TREES ARE SWAYING IN TIME WITH THE REGULAR ECHO OF IT.

THERE'S A SLIGHT VIBRATION COMING FROM SOMEWHERE.

MAYBE IT'S JUST IN MY HEAD.

RSTLE THMP

WHAT IS IT?

I SENSE A SLIGHT VIBRA-TION.

YES?

MISTER MAYOR?

I CAN'T FEEL ANYTHING.

HMM. A VIBRA-TION?

SHIROSUNA CLINIC

THMP

THMP

SHIROSUNA CLINIC

...I BELIEVE THE PATH OF RURAL MEDICINE IS TRULY THE RIGHT ONE.

PERSONALLY, FOR THE KIND OF DOCTOR I WISH TO BE...

THE LAST DOCTOR DIED TEN YEARS AGO, AND WE HAVEN'T HAD A NEW ONE SINCE.

YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW DELIGHTED I AM THAT A DOCTOR AS MAGNIFICENT AS YOURSELF WOULD COME TO THIS REMOTE VILLAGE.

SHE'LL BE WORKING AS YOUR ASSISTANT, DOCTOR FURUHATA.

THIS IS SHIZU KIKUGAMI. SHE'S BEEN THE VILLAGE NURSE FOR QUITE SOME TIME.

HELLO... PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER.

WONDER-FUL.

AND OF COURSE, I'LL ALSO DO WHAT-EVER I CAN.

PLEASE ASK MS. KIKUGAMI ANY QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE ABOUT THE VILLAGE.

IT'S AN OLD WELL, SO I SUPPOSE THERE'S SOME RUST DOWN THERE.

THE WATER TURNS RED SOMETIMES, BUT IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

OH, AND THERE'S NO INDOOR PLUMBING IN THE VILLAGE. PLEASE USE THE WELL OUT BACK.

THERE'S NO ISSUE WITH THE QUALITY OF THE WATER.

HYOOO

OH, THE WIND'S PICKED UP.

MIGHT BLOW HARD TONIGHT.

ALL RIGHT. I'LL BEGIN SEEING PATIENTS FIRST THING TOMORROW.

WELL THEN, DOCTOR. I'LL BE ON MY WAY.

MY GOOD-NESS. THANK YOU SO MUCH.

KLAK

SHIROSUNA

KLAK

KRRRRRRR

THANKS FOR STAYING LATE, MS. KIKUGAMI.

DOCTOR FURUHATA, I'M ALL DONE FOR TODAY.

I'LL SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW.

HYOOO

KLAK

KLAK

KLAK

IT REALLY DID TURN INTO QUITE THE STORM.

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING, BUT DO YOU SUFFER FROM ANEMIA AS WELL?

AND EVERYONE DOES LOOK QUITE PALE.

IT SEEMS THAT MANY PATIENTS IN THE VILLAGE ARE ANEMIC.

I FOUND THESE OLD MEDICAL RECORDS WHILE GOING THROUGH THE BOOK-SHELF.

BY THE WAY, MS. KIKU-GAMI.

I WONDER WHAT'S CAUSING IT.

I KNEW IT.

IT'S JUST AS YOU SAY.

YES.

SO PERHAPS WE INHERITED THE CONSTITUTION OF THE VILLAGE PIONEERS.

WE'VE MARRIED OUR RELATIVES OVER THE YEARS.

THIS VILLAGE HAS NEVER HAD MUCH TO DO WITH OTHER TOWNS.

I SEE. GENET-ICS, HM?

IT'S STRANGE FOR AB TO BE SO COMMON IN A POPULATION. IT'S NORMALLY THE LEAST COMMON TYPE.

THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY SO MANY VILLAGERS HAVE TYPE AB BLOOD.

IS THAT RIGHT? I'M TYPE O MYSELF.

AB.

...

WHAT'S YOUR BLOOD TYPE, MS. KIKUGAMI?

BUT CURRENTLY, AS A GENERAL RULE, YOU ONLY GET A TRANSFU-SION OF THE SAME BLOOD TYPE.

I FEEL LIKE I DREW A BAD HAND WITH TYPE O.

CONVERSELY, PEOPLE WITH TYPE O CAN DONATE TO ANY OTHER BLOOD TYPE, BUT CAN'T RECEIVE BLOOD FROM THEM.

THEY SAY AB USED TO BE ADVANTAGEOUS. AFTER ALL, AB PEOPLE CAN GET BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS FROM ANY OTHER BLOOD TYPE.

THE BLOOD AGGLU-TINATES. IN OTHER WORDS, IT HARDENS.

NEXT, PLEASE.

THE NEXT DAY ...

BUT I JUST FEEL SO WEARY.

YES...

ARE YOU EATING PROPERLY?

YOU'RE ALSO TERRIBLY PALE.

...

WELL, AS PALE AS YOU ARE, THAT'S NO WONDER.

I CAN'T HEAR HIS HEART-BEAT.

STRANGE. THIS PATIENT...

MS. KIKU-GAMI!

MS. KIKUGAMI! TAKE THIS PATIENT'S BLOOD PRESSURE!

TH-THAT'S ABSURD.

IT MUST BE TOO WEAK TO BE HEARD.

DOCTOR, WE HAVE AN URGENT CASE.

KRRIII

WHAT HAP-PENED ?!

SHE'S LOSING SO MUCH BLOOD! DID SHE GET HIT BY A CAR?!

PLIP

PLIP

COULD YOU BANDAGE HER UP?

THIS IS MY LITTLE SISTER. SHE STARTED BLEEDING EARLIER.

SHE... STARTED BLEEDING? WHY?

NO. SHE WAS PLAYING OUTSIDE, AND SHE STARTED BLEEDING.

HURRY AND BANDAGE—

NO. DOCTOR, SHE JUST STARTED TO BLEED.

YOUR HEAD?

DID YOU HURT YOURSELF?

THIS OFTEN HAPPENS HERE. IF YOU LEAVE IT, THE BLEEDING WILL STOP ON ITS OWN.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR CONCERN.

SO THEN MAYBE IT'S SOME DISEASE ...

JUST START-ED?

DOCTOR.

TO ME, TOO.

IT OFTEN HAP-PENS.

DO THE VILLAGERS ALWAYS BLEED LIKE THIS?

YES.

WHAT? MS. KIKUGAMI, WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

AND ME.

...

YOU START BLEEDING ALL OVER SUDDENLY.

YOU KNOW. JUST LIKE WITH HER.

NO THANKS. WE DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE.

...

...

WHAT IF IT'S SOME KIND OF DISEASE?

SHE SHOULD BE EXAMINED AT A LARGER HOSPITAL.

IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN WE CAN'T SIMPLY LEAVE IT BE.

OKAY.

...

I'D LIKE TO TAKE SOME BLOOD FROM YOUR SISTER AND RUN SOME TESTS. PLEASE BRING HER AGAIN TOMORROW.

WELL, AT ANY RATE...

MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T EAT BREAK-FAST.

THMP

HAAH...

THMP

WHAT A STRANGE VILLAGE.

BUZZ

ALL THE PATIENTS ARE SO STRANGE.

BUZZ

IN THIS SEA-SON?

A MOS-QUITO.

SLAP

BUZZ

BUZZ

...

HM?

...THEY USE AS ELECTRICAL POLES FELL IN THE STORM LAST NIGHT.

I GUESS ONE OF THE OLD TREES...

IS THIS BLOOD?

IT LOOKS LIKE BLOOD.

NO ONE WITH THIS KIND OF INJURY'S BEEN TO THE CLINIC.

BUT WHERE ARE THEY?

I GUESS SOMEONE GOT PINNED BY THE TREE.

MAYBE A BEAR?

A LARGE AMOUNT OF BLOOD WAS ALREADY CONGEALING WHERE THE TREE HAD BEEN RIPPED UP.

THERE'S NO WAY A CHILD LIKE THAT COULD LOSE THIS MUCH BLOOD AND LIVE.

THAT LITTLE GIRL? IMPOSSIBLE.

APPARENTLY, MANY OTHER VILLAGERS HAVE EXPERIENCED THE SAME BLOOD LOSS.

COULD THE CAUSE BE GENETIC, OR PERHAPS SOME KIND OF VIRUS?

YES, PROFES-SOR SHIBATA. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.

THANK YOU, PROFES-SOR.

YES.

YOU WILL ?

SEND ME THAT PATIENT'S BLOOD SAMPLE, AT ANY RATE. I'LL TAKE A LOOK.

I CAN'T REALLY SAY UNLESS I SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES. BUT I AM INTERESTED, FURUHATA.

MISS SUNA-GAMI!

NEXT PATIENT, PLEASE.

THE NEXT DAY ...

SHIROSU

WHERE'S YOUR SISTER?

OH?

YES.

I WANT TO BE HELPFUL, DOCTOR.

...

YOU CAN EXAMINE ME INSTEAD.

SHE CAN'T COME. SHE ATE BREAKFAST.

WE'LL TAKE SOME BLOOD. MS. KIKU-GAMI, SET THAT UP, PLEASE!

ALL RIGHT. SIT DOWN.

INVESTIGATING THIS ILLNESS ISN'T FOR MY SAKE, IT'S FOR YOURS.

THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR, TO HELP.

THMP

THMP

RIYO SUNAGAMI HAS BEEN COMING TO THE CLINIC EVERY DAY.

DOCTOR, HAVE YOU GOTTEN THE RESULTS YET?

AFTER TWO WEEKS IN THE VILLAGE...

...I STILL FELT STRANGELY ANXIOUS ABOUT THE PLACE.

...LOOK MUCH BETTER THAN YOU DID BEFORE.

RIYO, YOU...

NO. NOT YET, UNFORTUNATELY.

BUT IT'S STRANGE.

I'M ALWAYS LIKE THIS.

HAVE YOU BEEN EATING HEALTHY LIKE I INSTRUCTED?

NO.

I'M PRETTIER THAT WAY.

BUT I LIKE MY PALE SELF.

BUT ONCE WE'RE IN PERFECT HEALTH, WE BLEED OUT.

THIS IS HOW THE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE. WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO HEAL, SO EVEN IF WE BLEED OUT, WE PRODUCE MORE BLOOD SOON ENOUGH.

SO WE GET PALE AND SICKLY AGAIN.

TIK

TIK

THMP

IT'S STRANGELY HUMID.

HAAH...

FWSH

I CAN'T SLEEP.

...

THMP

NZGT

I'M THIRSTY...

GLUG

GLUG

RUSTY. OR MAYBE COPPERY.

IT TASTES ALMOST LIKE... THERE'S BLOOD IN IT.

THE WATER TASTES TERRI-BLE AS EVER.

HAAH ...

KZCT

THMP

THMP

NOW I FEEL EVEN WORSE.

MAYBE A LITTLE AIR WILL HELP.

THMP

I CAN HEAR IT PERFECTLY.

THMP

THAT STRANGE VIBRATION.

THMP

I CAN FEEL IT SO CLEARLY ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS.

THMP

WHERE IS THAT SOUND COMING FROM?

THMP

IT'S GETTING LOUDER.

THMP

THERE'S SOMETHING... UP AHEAD.

THMP

DOCTOR!

AH!

YOU SHOULDN'T BE WALKING ALONE OUT HERE AT NIGHT.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

SUNA-GAMI.

WHY DON'T YOU JOIN ME?

I CAME TO PRAY. AT THE SHRINE UP AHEAD.

THMP

THMP

THMP

THEY SAY THAT THE BLOOD OF MAIDENS WAS OFFERED TO THE GODS AS A SACRIFICE IN THIS VILLAGE LONG AGO.

DOCTOR ...

...ARE COMING FROM THE GROUND BELOW THE SHRINE.

IT'S LIKE THE SOUND AND THE VIBRATION...

THP THP

S-STOP!

PLIP PLIP

I OFTEN COME TO PRAY WHILE I HAVE PLENTY OF BLOOD IN MY BODY.

AND BECAUSE OF THAT, WE OFFER OUR BLOOD TO THE EARTH WHEN WE PRAY EVEN NOW.

SHF

YOU GO LIKE THIS.

YOU HAVE TO STOP THIS.

NO ...!

...

PLEASE LET ME BE WITH DOCTOR FURU-HATA.

COME ON NOW! STOP THIS BLEEDING!

OOZE

UNH ...

UNNNH !

MNOO MNOO

ONE

ONE

PLIP

PLIP

DOCTOR, IT SEEMS THAT IT'S STARTED.

SUNA-GAMI!

THERE'S SO MUCH BLOOD!

STAY WITH ME!

SUNA-GAMI!

YOU... IF YOU LOSE THIS MUCH BLOOD...

HNNGH ...

...WAS SUCKED INTO THE GROUND BEFORE MY EYES.

THE OCEAN OF BLOOD THAT CAME FROM RIYO SUNAGAMI'S BODY...

STAGGER

DOCTOR, I'M GOING HOME...

UNH... NNNGH.

THMP

THMP

STAGGER

STAGGER

SOME-
THING
IN THE
SHRINE
GROUNDS
...

THERE'S
SOME-
THING
THERE.

THMP

THMP

THMP

KRNCH

KRNCH

THMP

THMP

KRNCH

THMP

THMP

NO.

TREE ROOTS ?

WHAT IS THIS?

WHAT...

IS THIS... BLOOD ?

ALMOST LIKE... BLOOD VES-SELS.

LUKE-WARM ...

SOFT...

I CUT THEM WITH THE SHOVEL.

THEY'RE BLEEDING.

OOZING

THEY'RE LIKE AN ANIMAL'S VEINS.

WHAT ON EARTH...

I TOOK A SAMPLE HOME WITH ME.

...EVENTUALLY BEGAN TO HARDEN INTO A JELLY.

JUST LIKE BLOOD COAGU-LATING ON A WOUND.

THE SUBSTANCE THAT OOZED FROM THE VEINLIKE OBJECTS...

THIS IS BLOOD.

AND...

NO MIS-TAKE.

...ARE BLOOD VESSELS WITH HUMAN BLOOD IN THEM.

THUMP

THUMP

BELOW THE GROUND AT THAT SHRINE...

IT'S HUMAN BLOOD!

TYPE AB!

I SAW IT, MISTER MAYOR. DO THE PEOPLE OF THE VILLAGE KNOW ABOUT THIS?

SHIROSUNA VILLAGE HALL

THE IDEA OF HUMAN BLOOD FLOWING BENEATH THE EARTH IS SIMPLY...

DOCTOR... YOU MUST HAVE BEEN DREAMING.

I BELIEVE THIS IS CONNECTED WITH THE VILLAGERS' MYSTERIOUS BLOOD LOSS.

UNFORTU-NATELY, I'M QUITE BUSY.

THEN COME AND TAKE A LOOK WITH ME.

IF YOU SAW IT FOR YOURSELF, YOU WOULD...

AH!

SLAUGHTER

SLAUGHTER

WHEN I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, IT WAS NO WONDER.

THMP

THMP

THE MAYOR WOULDN'T EVEN CONSIDER WHAT I HAD TO SAY.

SHFFF

SLAUGHTER

SLAUGHTER

PLIP

PLIP

THE BLOOD... IT'S INSTANTLY ABSORBED BY THE EARTH.

...

SNIFF SNIFF

THE SAME AS AT THE SHRINE.

SKRICH

SKRICH

WHAT IF UNDER HERE AS WELL...

WHAT'S HE DOING OVER THERE?

ISN'T THAT THE NEW DOCTOR...?

SKRICH

SKRICH

SKRCH

SKRCH

THUMP

THUMP

HERE... LOOK AT THIS!

ALL OF YOU!

THESE ARE ARTERIES.

THUMP

THUMP

AND THERE'S HUMAN BLOOD FLOWING THROUGH THEM.

THUMP

THESE ARE BLOOD VESSELS.

THUMP

...

THIS IS PROBABLY RELATED TO YOUR ILLNESS!

CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS? HUMAN BLOOD IS CYCLING THROUGH THE GROUND.

YOUR BLOOD IS BEING TAKEN FROM YOU WITHOUT YOUR KNOWING IT.

I BELIEVE MY THEORY IS NOT MISTAKEN.

YOUR BLOOD IS BEING ABSORBED BY THESE BLOOD VESSELS.

AND BELOW ARE ABNORMALLY THICK BLOOD VESSELS.

THE BLOOD THAT COMES OUT OF YOUR BODIES GETS SUCKED UP BY THE EARTH.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

THUMP

AND CAN'T YOU ALL HEAR THAT SOUND?!

NO! DO TREE ROOTS PULSE?!

THUMP

THUMP

THOSE ARE JUST TREE ROOTS.

WHAT IS THE DOCTOR TALKING ABOUT?

THUMP

THUMP

SO?! DON'T YOU THINK IT SOUNDS JUST LIKE THE POUNDING OF A HEART?!

IT'S COMING FROM BELOW THE SHRINE.

THESE ARE THE BLOOD VESSELS I TOLD YOU ABOUT.

PLEASE LOOK AT THIS.

MISTER MAYOR!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

THUMP THUMP

I'LL SHOW YOU RIGHT NOW THAT THERE'S BLOOD FLOWING THROUGH THEM.

WATCH.

DON'T DO ANYTHING FOOLISH!

IT'S... IT'S JUST A WATER PIPE.

AH! DOCTOR! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THEN A GAS PIPE.

AAH...

...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A WATER PIPE LIKE THIS?!

AND THERE'S NO PLUMBING IN THIS VILLAGE.

WHAT? A WATER PIPE?

SHOCK

KRAK

LOOK!

IT'S BLOOD!

UNH... UNN- NNH...

PLUNGE

THRUST

PLUP

PLUP

UNH!
UNNH!

W-
WHAT'S
HAPPEN-
ING...

PSSHK

OH NO!

SUCH INCRED-IBLE PRES-SURE!

I NEVER DREAMED THIS WOULD HAPPEN... I HAVE TO HURRY AND SUTURE THE WOUND!

THE BLOOD LEAVING THE ARTERY IS BEING TAKEN FROM THE VILLAGERS.

SKRK

I DIDN'T NOTICE THEM BEFORE, BUT THE GROUND LOOKS TRANSPARENT TO ME NOW.

I CAN SEE THEM...

HAA-
AGH.

I HAVE
TO
HURRY!!

THD

T
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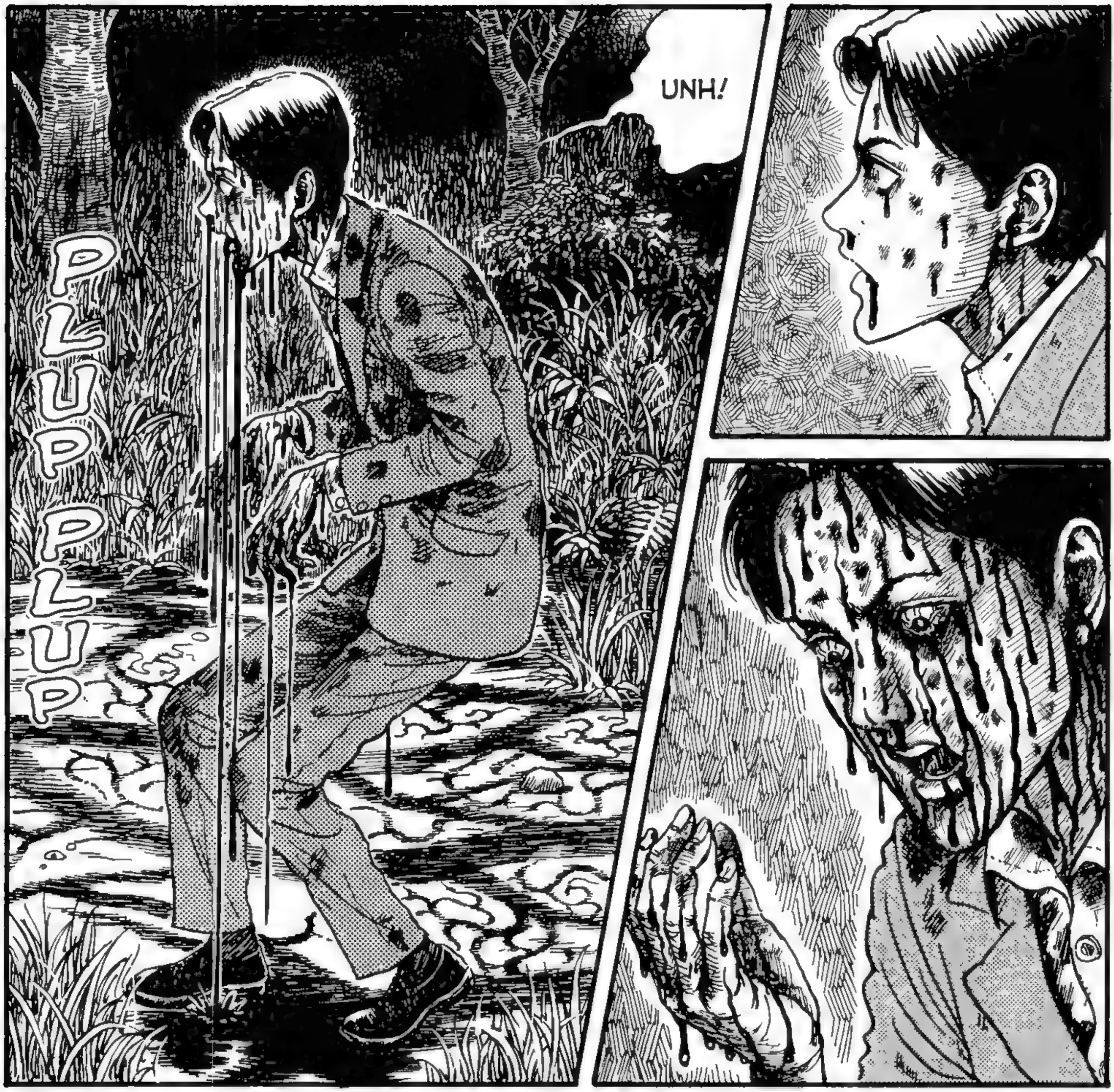
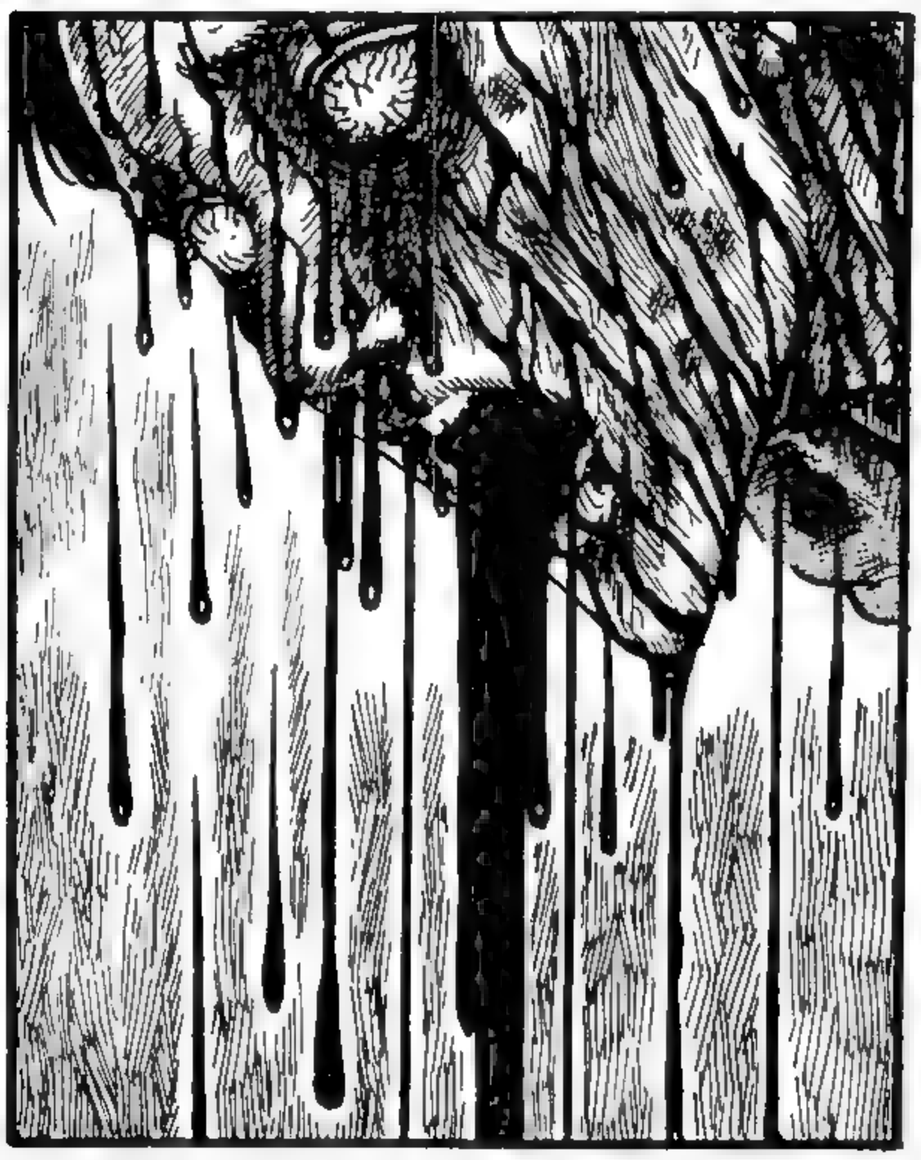
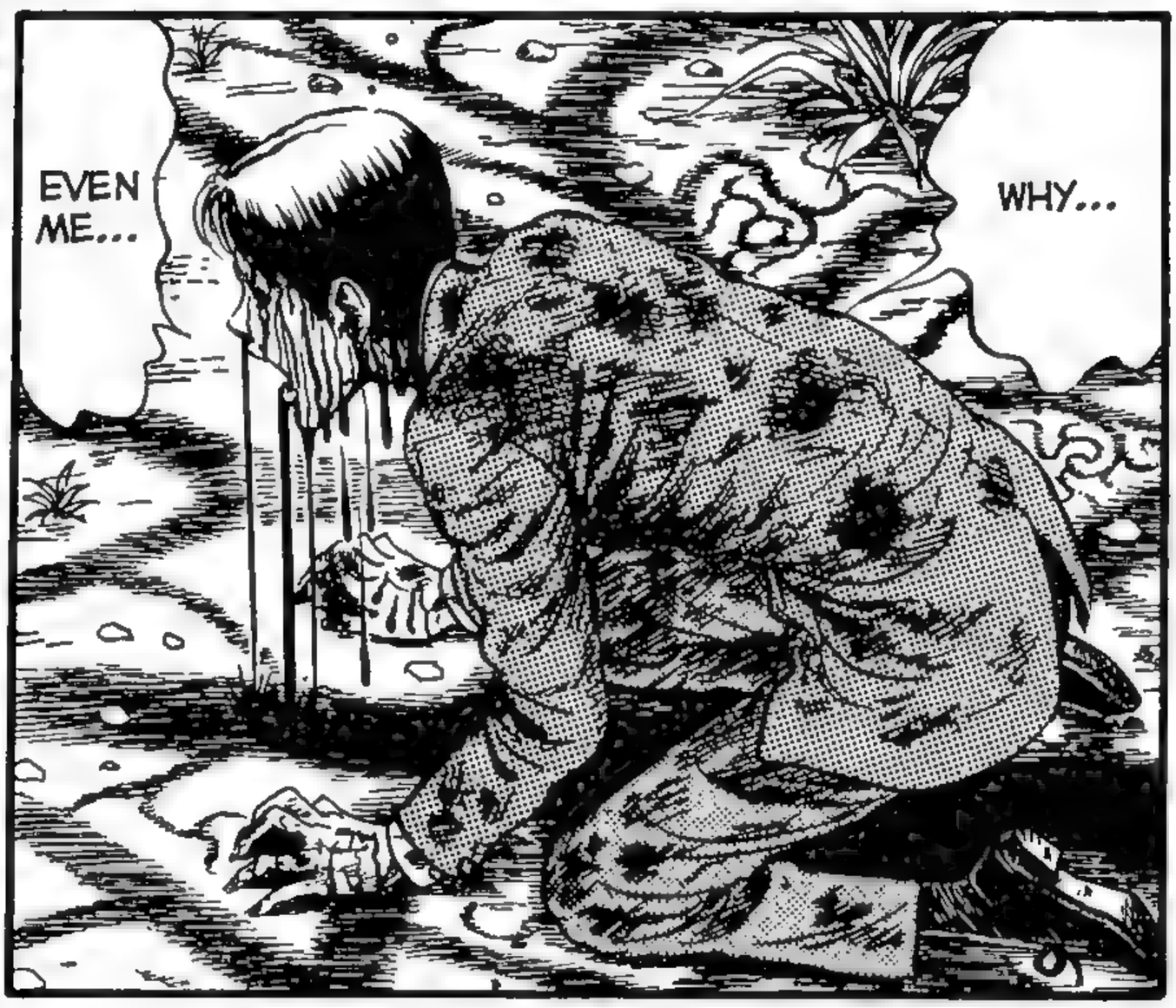
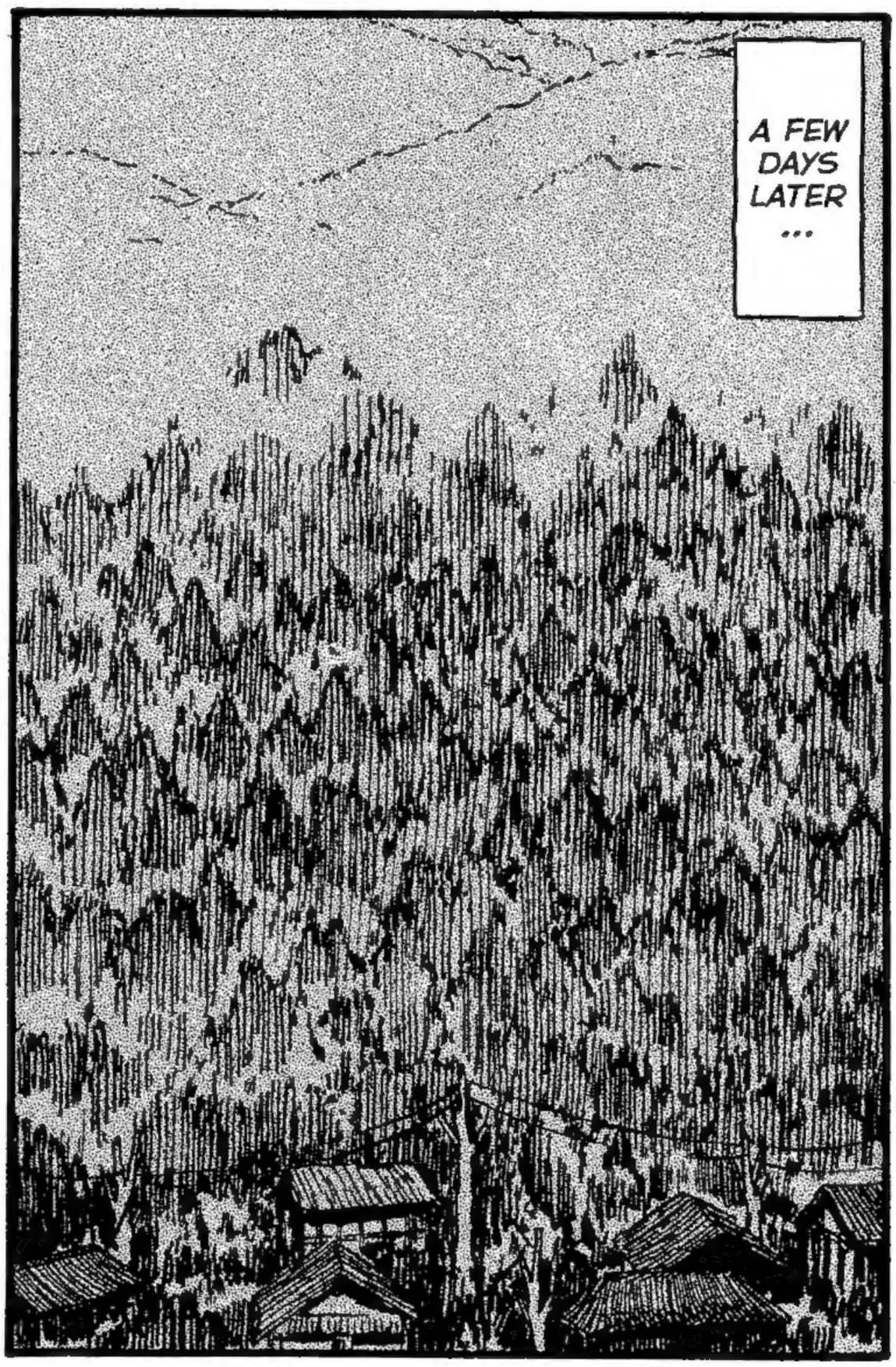
T


UNH!
PLUP
PLUP




EVEN ME...
WHY...

IS THERE ANYONE HERE? FURUHATA!
EXCUSE ME!


A FEW DAYS LATER ...

I'VE COME TO SPEAK WITH DOCTOR FURUHATA ABOUT AN UNUSUAL ILLNESS IN THIS VILLAGE.

OH... MY NAME IS SHI-BATA. I'M WITH MINAMI-ZATO UNIVER-SITY.

WHO'S CALLING?

YES?

SHE REALLY IS QUITE PALE.

I'LL GO GET HIM NOW.

HELLO... PROFESSOR. IT'S BEEN A WHILE.

F- FURUHATA ...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Junji Ito made his professional manga debut in 1987 and since then has gone on to be recognized as one of the greatest contemporary artists working in the horror genre. His titles include *Tomie* and *Uzumaki*, which have been adapted into live-action films; *Gyo*, which was adapted into an animated film; and his books *Black Paradox*, *Deserter*, *Fragments of Horror*, *Frankenstein*, *Lovesickness*, *No Longer Human*, *Remina*, *Sensor*, *Shiver*, *Smashed*, *The Liminal Zone*, and *Venus in the Blind Spot*, all of which are available from VIZ Media.

He is a four-time Eisner Award winner. In 2019 his collection *Frankenstein* won in the "Best Adaptation from Another Medium" category, and in 2021 he was awarded "Best Writer/Artist," while *Remina* received the award for "Best U.S. Edition of International Material (Asia)." *Lovesickness* won "Best U.S. Edition" in 2022.

TOMBS

JUNJI ITO STORY COLLECTION

Story & Art by Junji Ito

Ito Junji Kessakushu 9: Bohyo no machi
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PARENTAL ADVISORY
TOMBS is rated T+ for Older Teen and is recommended for ages 16 and up. This volume contains graphic violence and horror themes.

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